

LAND NORTH WEST OF SOUTHWATER, HORSHAM

PLANNING STATEMENT

FEBRUARY 2026





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Appendix 1 – Emerging Local Plan Policy HA3 Compliance Table

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This Planning Statement supports an outline planning application for a comprehensive mixed-use neighbourhood and associated infrastructure to the north west of Southwater, Horsham.
- 1.2 The application is made on behalf of Berkeley Strategic Land Limited (**'Berkeley'**), part of the Berkeley Group, which has a strong track record of working collaboratively with local authorities and communities to bring forward high-quality, sustainable developments, as recently demonstrated through the local Broadacres and Highwood Village developments.
- 1.3 This application follows long-term engagement with Horsham District, West Sussex County, and Southwater Parish Councils, and other key stakeholders. The proposals have evolved significantly over time, informed by extensive technical work, pre-application discussions, and community engagement.

Planning Context

- 1.4 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires all planning applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 1.5 The Southwater Neighbourhood Plan allocates a significant portion of the Site for development under Policy SNP2, for 422 – 450 new homes and associated infrastructure.
- 1.6 Furthermore, the entire Site is proposed for allocation under Policy HA3 of the emerging local plan. The proposed development has been designed to meet the requirements of both Southwater Neighbourhood Plan Policy SNP2 and the allocation under Policy HA3 of the emerging Local Plan.
- 1.7 The emerging Local Plan has been submitted for examination, and the Council's 'Shaping Development in Horsham' planning advice document endorses that Council will positively consider proposals submitted on sites identified in the emerging Local Plan.
- 1.8 Horsham District Council can demonstrate a 1.7-year supply of housing, well below the 5-year requirement. Housing delivery rates have also fallen below national targets in recent years. In this context, it is clear that the delivery of this Site is of critical importance to meet the District's existing and future development needs.
- 1.9 The planning application has been submitted in advance of the adoption of the emerging Local Plan, in response to the Council's current housing land supply deficit and the overarching need to bring forward suitable land for development.

Planning Balance Summary

- 1.10 Southwater Neighbourhood Plan allocates part of the Site for development. The emerging Local Plan (and the draft allocation for the Site in particular) is a key material consideration, alongside the NPPF.
- 1.11 The *presumption in favour of sustainable development* set out in paragraph 11(d) of the National Planning Policy Framework ('NPPF'), and within adopted Local Plan Policy 1, is engaged.
- 1.12 There are no policies of the NPPF that protect areas or asset of particular importance that provide a strong reason for refusing the development (including NPPF Paragraph 14). As such, the *presumption in favour of sustainable development* provides that permission should be granted unless the adverse impacts significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.
- 1.13 The Proposed Development would deliver a substantial range of public benefits, including:
- Approximately 1,000 new homes, of which up to 350 will be affordable homes;
 - Specialist accommodation comprising up to 80 extra care/care home units;
 - 5 Gypsy and Traveller pitches;
 - A new local neighbourhood centre, comprising 2,000sqm of commercial and community floorspace (designed to complement and not compete with Lintot square);
 - Approximately 4 hectares of business/employment floorspace;
 - A Primary School, a 60-space nursery, and a secondary school;
 - Approximately 59 hectares of new public open space, including multi-functional green spaces, sports pitches, children's play areas, and a 5km walking/cycling loop;
 - Redevelopment/enhancement of the agricultural buildings adjacent to Great House Farm House;
 - Significant capital investment in the area, with job creation during the construction of the Site and its ongoing operational management, and the local economic contribution of future residents;
 - A suite of off-site enhancements to the local pedestrian, cycle, public transport, and highway networks; and
 - Biodiversity Net Gain of at least +10%.
- 1.14 The adverse impacts of the Proposed Development are limited and consistent with those generally expected of the development of any greenfield site for housing (i.e. impacts that are inherent to the delivery of housing / affordable housing) - something that is clearly needed in the District.
- 1.15 Overall, it is clear that the adverse impacts of the Proposed Development are limited and do not outweigh the substantial range of public benefits. On this basis, planning permission should be granted without delay.

2. Introduction

2.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Nexus Planning, on behalf of Berkeley Strategic Land Limited (**'the Applicant'**), in support of an outline planning application at Land North West of Southwater, Horsham (**'the Site'**), submitted to Horsham District Council (**'the Council'**) for:

Outline planning application, with all matters reserved (except for primary access to the highway) for a phased development comprising: the demolition of existing buildings and the construction of residential dwellings (including affordable housing) (Use Classes C2 and C3); a mixed-use neighbourhood centre (Use Classes E and F); education facilities (Use Class F1(a)); business and employment floorspace (Use Classes B2, B8 and E(g)); redevelopment of existing agricultural buildings including construction of a building for community use (Use Classes E and F2); improvements to public rights of way; sports pitches; gypsy and traveller pitches/plots; public open space; landscaping, and associated infrastructure.

2.2 All matters are reserved save for primary access to the highway from Worthing Road (three accesses), Two Mile Ash Road (one access) and Chessall Avenue (one access).

2.3 This Planning Statement includes an Affordable Housing Statement (Section 9) and Draft Section 106 Heads of Terms (Section 10). Section 5 summarises pre-application stakeholder engagement, with a Statement of Community Involvement (**'SCI'**) document covering community engagement separately.

Environmental Statement

2.4 The Proposed Development may be considered 'EIA development' in respect of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (**'the EIA Regulations'**). A voluntary Environmental Statement (**'ES'**) prepared in respect of the EIA Regulations is therefore submitted with this application in order to assess the significance of the effects on the environment.

2.5 The ES has been informed by a Scoping Opinion Request submitted to the Council in November 2025 and a Scoping Opinion issued by the Council on 15 December 2025 (Application Reference CA/24/00788).

Application Documentation

2.6 The planning application documentation submitted for approval comprises:

- Application forms and certificates
- Site Location Plan (Drawing No. KPK-A019-0005-RevG)
- Land Use Parameter Plan (Drawing No. KPK-A019-0006-RevD)
- Movement Parameter Plan (Drawing No. KPK-A019-0007-RevD)
- Density Parameter Plan (Drawing No. KPK-A019-0008-RevE)
- Storey Heights Parameter Plan (Drawing No. KPK-A019-0009-RevD)
- Landscape Parameter Plan (Drawing No. KPK-A019-0011-RevG)

- Primary Access Drawings:
 - J1 – Drawing no. UK0043490.9681-WSP-XX-XX-DR-TP-0103;
 - J2 – Drawing no. UK0043490.9681-WSP-XX-XX-DR-TP-0101;
 - J3 – Drawing no. UK0043490.9681-WSP[1]XX-XX-DR-TP-0100;
 - J4 – Drawing no. UK0043490.9681-WSP-XX-XX-DR-TP-0104; and
 - J5 – Drawing no. UK0043490.9681-WSP-XX-XX-DR-TP-0102.

2.7 The ES submitted with the planning application, including detailed technical assessment work, covers the following matters, alongside a Non-Technical Summary and Technical Appendices:

- **Chapters 1-5:** Introductory Chapters
- **Chapter 6:** Air Quality
- **Chapter 7:** Heritage and Archaeology
- **Chapter 8:** Ecology and Arboriculture
- **Chapter 9:** Landscape and Visual
- **Chapter 10:** Noise and Vibration
- **Chapter 11:** Socioeconomics and Human Health
- **Chapter 12:** Traffic and Transport
- **Chapter 13:** Water Resources, Flood Risk and Drainage
- **Chapter 14:** Ground Conditions and Contamination
- **Chapter 15:** Climatic Factors
- **Chapter 16:** Cumulative Effects
- **Chapter 17:** Summary of Effects and Mitigation

2.8 Alongside the ES, the following technical documents and supporting material should also be taken into consideration:

- Planning Statement (including Affordable Housing Statement and Draft Heads of Terms)
- Design and Access Statement
- Illustrative Masterplan (Drawing No. KPK-A019-0015-RevG)
- Indicative Phasing Plan (Drawing No. KPK-A019-0010-RevD)
- Indicative Buildings Proposed to be Demolished Plan (Drawing No. KPK-A019-0013-RevB)
- Biodiversity Net Gain Metric and Report
- Statement of Community involvement
- Retail Impact Assessment
- Minerals Resource Assessment
- Climate Risk and Resilience Impact Assessment
- Utilities Statement

3. Site Context

The Site and Surrounding Area

- 3.1 The Site extends to approximately 116.7 hectares ('ha') total, comprising 'the Main Site' and a separate smaller parcel 'the North Site', located adjacent to Christ Hospital Rail Station as identified on the submitted Site Location Plan.
- 3.2 The Main Site is located adjacent to the settlement boundary of Southwater and extends to 115.36ha. It comprises primarily agricultural land with a number of farm buildings (including a dairy farm) located to the north, with access taken off Two Mile Ash Road. A small number of buildings associated with Great House Farm (which is Grade II* listed and is outside of the application boundary) are located in the south-eastern portion of the Site.
- 3.3 The Main Site is bounded by the A24 to the north and by Two Mile Ash Road to the west. The existing settlement of Southwater, a Tier 2 settlement in the Council's settlement hierarchy¹, lies to the east. The Main Site is intersected by the Downs Link and is bounded to the south by residential properties along Bonfire Hill and Church Lane.
- 3.4 The North Site is located adjacent to Christ's Hospital station car park, north-west of the main site and extends to approximately 1.34ha.
- 3.5 Further details of the Site are set out in the accompanying Design and Access Statement ('DAS').

Constraints and Designations

- 3.6 The Site is located outside of the Metropolitan Green Belt and the High Weald National Landscape.
- 3.7 Great House Farmhouse (Grade II*) is in the Southern portion of the main site but inset from the red line boundary. Christ's Hospital School, which includes another two Grade II* listed buildings within the campus, is located northwest of the Site. 23 Grade II listed buildings and 10 Parish Heritage Assets ('PHAs')² are located within proximity of the Site.
- 3.8 Part of the main Site lies within an Archaeological Notification Area ('ANA'), as defined by West Sussex County Council ('WSCC'). A site of archaeological importance is located at The Moat House, along Two Mile Ash Road to the west of the site, outside the site boundary.

¹ As set out in Policy 3 of the Horsham District Planning Framework 2015.

² As identified in the Southwater Neighbourhood Development Plan 2021.

- 3.9 There are three areas of Ancient Woodland located within the Main Site. Courtland Wood is in the centre of the main site (which is contiguous with an area of Ancient Woodland known as Two Mile Ash Gill). Smith's Copse is located approximately 200m north-east of Courtland Wood; and finally, a separate area of Ancient Woodland is located north of the northern site.
- 3.10 Courtland Wood is also designated as a Local Wildlife Site, which is referred to as a Site of Nature Conservation Importance ('**SNCI**') within the adopted Development Plan.
- 3.11 A number of Public Rights of Way ('**PROW**') run through the main site including the Downs Link, a disused railway line that runs from Shoreham-by-Sea through to Guildford.
- 3.12 The Site, with exception of the top north-western corner, is located within a Bat Sustenance Zone.
- 3.13 The entirety of the Site is located within Flood Zone 1, the lowest risk of fluvial flooding. There are linear features across the Site which are subject to higher risk of surface water flooding.
- 3.14 Further details on constraints are contained within the associated technical reports supplementing this submission.

Planning History

Plan Making

- 3.15 The southern region of the Main Site is allocated for development within the Southwater Neighbourhood Development Plan ('**the Neighbourhood Plan**') (2021) under Policy SNP2 (Land West of Southwater). Policy SNP2 allocates the land for 422-450 new homes, with a minimum of 350 of these units being Use Class C3 and a minimum of 72 units being Use Class C2. A minimum of 8 hectares of public open space is also required as part of this allocation.
- 3.16 In addition, Policy SNP3 of the Neighbourhood Plan allocates part of the Site as safeguarded for either a secondary school or an all-through school until 2031 to meet the demand for school places (unless sufficient capacity at an alternative school is otherwise identified).
- 3.17 Finally, the Site benefits from a draft allocation within the Regulation 19 version of the emerging Horsham Local Plan 2019 ('**the emerging Local Plan**'), under Strategic Policy HA3 which has been submitted to the Secretary of State for examination. The Proposed Development has been designed to align with the requirements set out in this draft allocation.
- 3.18 Further details on the emerging Local Plan and the status of this allocation are provided in Section 7.

Planning Applications

- 3.19 Adjacent to the south-eastern edge of the Main Site is the Southwater Strategic Site (Policy SD10), allocated in the adopted Horsham District Planning Framework (**'the Local Plan'**) (2015) for approximately 600 new homes and playing pitches.
- 3.20 Berkeley Homes achieved outline planning permission for the site in June 2015 for 540 dwellings and 54 retirement living apartments (LPA ref. DC/14/0590). This site is now known locally as "Broadacres."
- 3.21 In October 2022, a planning application for the development of Land North West of Southwater was submitted to the Council by Berkeley (LPA ref. DC/22/1916). This application sought outline planning permission for the erection of up to 1,500 dwellings, employment and community spaces, education facilities, sports facilities, traveller pitches, public open space and associated landscaping and infrastructure.
- 3.22 The 2022 application was submitted against the backdrop of the Site's proposed allocation in the emerging Local Plan and the lack of a five-year housing land supply (**'HLS'**) in the district. The application was subsequently withdrawn in February 2023 but officer, stakeholder and community feedback on the application has provided an important starting point for this latest proposal.

4. The Proposed Development

4.1 This section of the Planning Statement summarises the component parts of the development for which outline planning permission is sought.

Plans for Approval

4.2 Approval of the following plans is sought:

- Site Location Plan (Drawing No. KPK-A019-0005-RevG)
- Land Use Parameter Plan (Drawing No. KPK-A019-0006-RevD)
- Movement Parameter Plan (Drawing No. KPK-A019-0007-RevC)
- Density Parameter Plan (Drawing No. KPK-A019-0005-RevD)
- Storey Heights Parameter Plan (Drawing No. KPK-A019-0009-RevD)
- Landscape Parameter Plan (Drawing No. KPK-A019-0011-RevG)
- Primary Access Drawings:
 - J1 – Drawing no. UK0043490.9681-WSP-XX-XX-DR-TP-0103;
 - J2 – Drawing no. UK0043490.9681-WSP-XX-XX-DR-TP-0101;
 - J3 – Drawing no. UK0043490.9681-WSP[1]XX-XX-DR-TP-0100;
 - J4 – Drawing no. UK0043490.9681-WSP-XX-XX-DR-TP-0104; and
 - J5 – Drawing no. UK0043490.9681-WSP-XX-XX-DR-TP-0102.

Description of Development

4.3 This application is for outline planning permission with all matters reserved save for the principal means of access into the Site. Details of layout, design, landscape and scale will be submitted as part of subsequent applications attached to each phase of development.

4.4 Therefore, the application seeks approval for the following (**'the Proposed Development'**):

Outline planning application, with all matters reserved (except for primary access to the highway) for a phased development comprising: the demolition of existing buildings and the construction of residential dwellings (including affordable housing) (Use Classes C2 and C3); a mixed-use neighbourhood centre (Use Classes E and F); education facilities (Use Class F1(a)); business and employment floorspace (Use Classes B2, B8 and E(g)); redevelopment of existing agricultural buildings including construction of a building for community use (Use Classes E and F2); improvements to public rights of way; sports pitches; gypsy and traveller pitches/plots; public open space; landscaping, and associated infrastructure.

Key Features of the Proposed Development

- 4.5 The Proposed Development has been developed in conjunction with draft Policy HA3 of the emerging Local Plan. As set out on the submitted parameter plans, it seeks to deliver the following:
- Up to 1,000 dwellings (Use Class C3);
 - Up to 80 Extra Care/Care Home Units (Use Class C2);
 - Up to 2,000sqm local neighbourhood centre, comprising commercial and community space (Use Classes E and F);
 - Up to 4 hectares of Business/Employment Space (Use Classes B2, B8, and E(g));
 - A 1 Form-Entry (FE) Primary School (Expandable to 2FE) (Use Class F1(a));
 - A 6FE Secondary School (expandable to 8FE) (Use Class F1(a));
 - A nursery providing a minimum of 60 spaces (Use Class E(f));
 - 5 Gypsy and Traveller pitches;
 - 2.5 hectares of sports pitches, comprising 2 football pitches and 1 cricket field;
 - Approximately 59 hectares of Public Open Space, including retained woodland, natural and semi-natural green space, amenity green space, parks and gardens and Children and Youth Play Spaces (forming LAPs, LEAP, and NEAP);
 - Improvements to existing Public Rights of Way;
 - Redevelopment of existing barn complex, to include the demolition of modern agricultural buildings, the principle of converting an existing 230sqm agricultural building, plus the erection of a new up to 350sqm building for flexible community use (Use Classes E and F);
 - Primary access to the highway from Worthing Road, Two Mile Ash Road, and Chessall Avenue.
- 4.6 The application also includes the potential for enhancements at Christ's Hospital Station, within the northern parcel. However, these elements would only be implemented if required, subject to assessment of the existing car park's capacity at a point to be determined in discussion with the Council.
- 4.7 Details of the Proposed Development including its evolution, design principles and indicative layout, are contained within the accompanying Design and Access Statement. A summary is provided below.

New Homes

- 4.8 The Proposed Development will deliver approximately 1,000 homes (including affordable housing), in addition to approximately 80 Extra-Care/Care Home Units (Use Class C2). The quantum of development has been informed with regard to Policy HA3 of the emerging Local Plan and Policy SNP2 of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 4.9 35% affordable housing will be provided in relation to the Use Class C3 dwellings, in accordance with local policy requirements. The proposed Class C2 Extra Care/Care Home units will not be eligible for affordable housing, as these will not be self-contained units, in accordance with adopted and emerging policy.

- 4.10 The residential development will comprise a mix of types and tenures, reflective of evidenced needs. As this is an outline planning application, permission is not sought for a specific dwelling mix. This will be determined at the reserved matters stage.
- 4.11 However, as demonstrated within the Design and Access Statement and Illustrative Masterplan, the Proposed Development is capable of delivering a suitable mix of housing with a range of types and sizes to provide for the needs of residents in accordance with the Council's latest evidence.
- 4.12 The accompanying Design and Access statement shows how the development has been informed by relevant constraints and opportunities and will enable the delivery of a range of housing types and tenures to meet the needs of future residents. It further demonstrates the design intent supporting the submitted Parameter Plans.
- 4.13 The proposed Extra-Care/Care Home units would be located adjacent to the proposed neighbourhood centre. This ensures that future residents will have sustainable access to local services and facilities to meet their day-to-day needs.
- 4.14 5 Gypsy and Traveller Site pitches are proposed to the north-eastern corner of the main site, with access provided from Worthing Road.

Commercial

- 4.15 Three separate commercial spaces will be delivered as part of the Proposed Development – a neighbourhood centre, employment and business space (per emerging Policy HA3).
- 4.16 The Neighbourhood Centre will be located at the centre of the Main Site, will provide up to 2,000 sqm GIA of Class E commercial space and Class F (allowing for the provision of retail, cafes and restaurants, convenience retail, and flexible commercial/employment uses).
- 4.17 The proposed employment space will be located to the north of the Site. The employment space will provide circa 4 hectares (c.17,000 sqm GIA) of flexible commercial/employment (Use Class B2, B8 and E(g)) with capacity to include additional floorspace at mezzanine levels.
- 4.18 The quantum and location of employment space has been informed by the draft policy requirements of Policy HA3. However, the specific mix of employment space within both the Neighbourhood Centre and business space will be secured at the reserved matters stage.

4.19 Flexible community provision (Use Classes E and F2) will be located to the southeast of Great House Farm, through the redevelopment of the existing agricultural barns, alongside the construction of a new building. The barns most important to the setting of Great House Farm will be retained and adapted (subject to feasibility). All other barns and structures are proposed to be demolished. Specific details on the redevelopment of these barns will be agreed at reserved matters stage.

Education

4.20 Educational uses are to be provided through a single-form entry (1FE) primary school, expandable to two-form entry (2FE), a 60-space nursery, and a six-form entry (6FE) secondary school, expandable to eight-forms of entry (8FE).

4.21 Sufficient land will be provided to WSCC such that the schools would be capable of providing special needs facilities as part of their expansion, in accordance with the requirements in emerging Policy HA3.

4.22 It is anticipated that the developer will be obligated to provide suitable, serviced land parcels for both schools and that WSCC will be responsible for their delivery thereafter. Further details on this is contained within the Draft Heads of Terms contained in Section 9 of this Planning Statement.

Access and Movement

4.23 Primary vehicular access to the existing highway network comprises the only detailed matter subject to planning approval as part of the Proposed Development.

4.24 Access to the development will be taken from the following locations (as shown on the plans submitted for approval):

- **Junction 1:** The creation of a new roundabout from Worthing Road, south of Hop Oast Roundabout;
- **Junction 2:** A new priority junction to the west of Worthing Road, just north of the proposed primary school and south of the Hen and Chicken public house;
- **Junction 3:** A new junction onto Chessall Avenue to the south;
- **Junction 4:** A new priority junction south of the new roundabout, serving the Gypsy and Traveller pitches; and,
- **Junction 5:** A new priority junction onto Two Mile Ash Road to the west.

4.25 The Proposed Development incorporates a clear hierarchy of routes for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles.

4.26 A primary road will connect Junction A1 (from Worthing Road, south of Hop Oast Roundabout), to the Junction A2 (from Worthing Road, further south). The primary road will serve the proposed secondary school, employment space and neighbourhood centre, allowing for buses to access these key areas.

- 4.27 Two secondary roads are proposed to extend from the primary road, the first leading west to Two Mile Ash Road, and one further south towards Chessall Avenue. Tertiary streets will extend from the primary and secondary roads, serving access to the various development parcels. Junctions off the Primary Road will be T-Junctions to enforce the street hierarchy.
- 4.28 Car and Cycle parking (including EV Charging) will be provided in accordance with adopted standards at the time of a Reserved Matters application, unless material considered dictate otherwise.
- 4.29 Public Rights of Way (**'PROW'**), including the Downs Link, will be maintained and enhanced where appropriate, with links to the wider network retained.
- 4.30 The proposals include a series of active travel improvements, both on-and off-site, linking the site to key destinations, including services and facilities in Southwater, Horsham, Christ's Hospital, and the wider PROW network. An active travel assessment is included within the submitted Transport Assessment.
- 4.31 Further detail is set out in the Transport Assessment, Framework Travel Plan, and Transport ES Chapter.

Landscaping / Public Open Space

- 4.32 The development proposals provide for approximately +59ha of open space, across various typologies including natural, semi-natural and amenity greenspace, allotments, parks and gardens, and dedicated play facilities. The Council's Playing Pitch Strategy and Open Space, Sport and Recreation Review (2021) recommends approximately +11ha of open space provision based on the quantum of development proposed, meaning the proposals substantially exceed these requirements (by around +48ha).
- 4.33 Dedicated play space will be provided throughout the proposed development, taking the form of Neighbourhood Equipped Area of Play (**'NEAP'**), Locally Equipped Areas of Play (**'LEAP'**), and Local Areas of Play (**'LAP'**). Sufficient space is included within the NEAP to accommodate a Multi-Use Games Area (**'MUGA'**) type of provision, aligning with Draft Policy HA3. The exact location and specifications of these facilities is to be determined at Reserved Matters stage.
- 4.34 In alignment with emerging Policy HA3, a 5km 'Trim Trail' is provided throughout the development proposals, featuring 'play on the way' opportunities and natural play features.
- 4.35 The principles promoted by Make Space for Girls (**'MSFG'**) have informed the approach to play and recreation across the development. The approach is also informed by the principles of delivering inclusive and accessible spaces. Further detail in respect of the landscaping and Public Open Space (**'POS'**) strategy is set out within the accompanying DAS.

Phasing

- 4.36 The proposed phasing plan is indicative at this stage. However, it provides an indication of how the Proposed Development could be delivered to provide the homes and associated infrastructure alongside one another in an appropriate programme.
- 4.37 The indicative phasing plan also considers the site access strategy in order to establish how each phase of the development can be delivered safely, with minimum impact to both the highway network and new and existing residents.
- 4.38 Each phase will look to deliver *circa* 300-400 dwellings in a mix of market and affordable homes, along with other key uses of development including schools, community facilities, and sports pitches.
- 4.39 Through discussions with the Council, the Parish Council, West Sussex Country Council ('**WSSCC**') and the local community, it is understood there is a desire for the secondary school to be delivered in the first phase of development. This is incorporated into the indicative phasing plan to reflect the urgent need for a secondary school.
- 4.40 The neighbourhood centre is proposed to come forward as part of the first phase of development, alongside associated landscaping and public open space in the area.
- 4.41 The second phase of development is intended to concentrate around the central and southern area of the Site, including near Great House Farmhouse, and would include the proposed primary school and nursery.
- 4.42 Further phasing details are contained with the Design and Access Statement as well as the Indicative Phasing Plan.

Benefits of the Proposed Development

4.43 The Proposed Development will provide a significant number of social, economic and environmental benefits for both new residents and the existing community. These are summarised below.

Meeting Local Housing Need

- The proposals will deliver up to 1,000 (of which 35% will be affordable) high quality and much needed new homes. These will comprise a mix of sizes, types and tenures to provide homes for all and help address affordability issues within Horsham District.
- Up to 80 Class C2 Extra Care/Care Home units.
- Five gypsy and traveller pitches are proposed to meet the need identified by HDC.

Education

- The proposals will provide land for a 1FE primary school (expandable to 2FE with SEND facilities), a 6FE secondary school (expandable to 8FE with SEND facilities), and a nursery with 60 places.
- The land for the secondary school is proposed to be made available within the first phase of the development to meet an urgent, identified need. Delivery of the schools will be by WSCC.
- The primary school and nursery are proposed to come forward with the second phase of the development, to ensure infrastructure provision is aligned with the delivery of new homes.
- Access to the schools will include dedicated cycleways and footways in order to encourage sustainable forms of transport. This will benefit both new and existing residents, reducing the need for pupils to travel outside of Southwater to access education facilities.

Highway Improvements

- The Hop Oast roundabout is proposed to be fully signalised to allow for pedestrians and cyclists to safely cross the A24 towards Horsham and to increase capacity of the junction for motorised vehicles. This will also enable enhanced connections to Horsham Park & Ride. Delivery and funding arrangements to secure this project are to be agreed between the developer, WSCC and HDC.
- Cycle improvements via Southwater Street / Lovers Lane to connect Southwater to Horsham.
- The proposals will also provide improvements to sustainable transport connections to Christ's Hospital Station alongside improvements to existing public rights of way, including the Downs Link.
- There is the potential for improved bus services that operate within Southwater, therefore enabling a more frequent service.

Health and Wellbeing

- Provision of new outdoor natural turf playing pitches in addition to other playing pitches at the proposed secondary school, which could be used by the community through a community use agreement once constructed. The outdoor pitches could also be configured to provide for junior and youth football and cricket in the summer.
- Public open space designed with regard of 'Making space for Girls' and for accessibility principles to promote greater inclusivity.
- A 5km circular trail for cycling and walking is proposed, extending from the Downs Link through the site with outdoor fitness elements, play areas and seating. The trail will also incorporate heritage and nature boards, which will provide educational benefits.

Community Facilities

- The provision of a new neighbourhood centre to complement Lintot Square, which has the ability to provide for small scale retail uses along with community facilities and is proposed to be delivered as part of the first phase of development.
- Redevelopment of the Orchard Barns area and the construction of a new building for flexible community uses (Use Classes E and F2). The reuse of the existing building, the scale of development and precise uses will be subject to a future feasibility study at reserved matters stage.

Natural Environment

- The delivery of new and enhanced ecological habitats and a biodiversity net gain of at least 10%.
- The existing Ancient Woodlands of Courtland Wood, Two Mile Ash Gill and Smith's Copse will be protected and enhanced.
- Approximately 59ha of new, retained and enhanced open space is proposed to include amenity greenspace, allotments, natural and semi-natural greenspace, park and gardens, and provision of play space for children and young people.

Economic Growth

- The Proposed Development will generate approximately 121 FTE net direct jobs per year during the construction phase and for approximately 455 FTE net direct jobs through the operational phase.
- Approximately £18.750 million a year will be generated in additional resident household spending.
- Approximately £2 million per year will be generated in additional Council tax revenue.
- The proposals will provide a significant investment in local infrastructure via either Section 106 or Community Infrastructure Levy ('CIL') payments.

5. Pre-Application Engagement

- 5.1 This section of the Planning Statement provides an overview of pre-application engagement with the Council, WSCC, Southwater Parish Council and Historic England.
- 5.2 The Framework sets out the Government's policies for England and identifies how these policies should be applied. NPPF paragraph 40 states that:

'...early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Good quality pre-application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community'.

- 5.3 Planning Practice Guidance ('PPG') also identifies pre-application engagement with local authorities as a means of improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system and improving the quality of planning applications and their likelihood of success.
- 5.4 Whilst this section provides a summary of the pre-application engagement carried out, this application is also accompanied by a separate Statement of Community Involvement ('SCI'), which provides further details regarding engagement with the Council, WSCC, Southwater Parish Council, the local community and other key stakeholders.

Pre-application with Horsham District Council

- 5.5 The Applicant and HDC entered into a Planning Performance Agreement ('PPA'), which was signed on 02 September 2025. Several pre-application meetings were held between July and December 2025, covering a variety of topics and were attended by the Applicant, members of the Applicant's project team and officers at HDC.
- 5.6 Feedback from HDC and how the Applicant has sought to address various issues is set out in the sections below.

Principle of Development

- 5.7 It was agreed that the Proposed Development would follow the draft requirements set out in emerging Local Plan wherever possible. HDC confirmed that officers would support draft allocations following the Council's endorsement of the Shaping Development for Horsham Supplementary Planning Document.
- 5.8 It was agreed that the Council could not demonstrate a five-year housing land supply, and the tilted balance was engaged.
- 5.9 HDC confirmed that officers would likely consider that the significant benefits of the proposed scheme would likely outweigh the conflicts with the Southwater Neighbourhood Plan as set out in paragraph 14 of the Framework.

Masterplanning and Design

5.10 Throughout the pre-application process, the masterplan has been adapted to reflect the Council's feedback from both the previously withdrawn application and pre-application discussions. Key changes include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Reducing the residential quantum from 1,500 to 1,000 dwellings, including the removal of four development parcels to protect the western boundary;
- Increasing public open space provision from 20 hectares to c.59 hectares;
- Increasing woodland buffer widths from 15 metres to between 20 and 50 metres, depending on location;
- Consolidating employment land to the north of the Site;
- Reconfiguring the scale and alignment of the Primary Spine Road, with a more sensitive secondary route directing development to the south;
- Relocating Gypsy and Traveller pitches to benefit from dedicated access arrangements;
- Increasing the buffer around Great House Farmhouse and removing modern shed structures to enable new landscaped areas;
- Redesigning street layouts to establish a clear hierarchy; and
- Relocating designated sports pitches in the southern part of the Site to protect the countryside character experienced from the Downs Link.

5.11 Further details on the masterplan's evolution is contained within the accompanying Design and Access Statement.

Education

5.12 HDC considers it necessary that a serviced site for the secondary school is provided to WSCC as part of the first phase of development, to ensure the school is built at the earliest possible opportunity. This has been incorporated into the indicative phasing strategy. The arrangements will be secured by a planning obligation in the Section 106 agreement.

Access & Highways

5.13 It was agreed that the highway improvements secured as part of the Horsham Golf Club appeal would, under the working assumption they would be delivered, form the baseline position for the purposes of highways considerations.

5.14 HDC is keen to ensure the Proposed Development would strengthen connections with Horsham, improve sustainable travel links and promote active travel.

5.15 The design of the primary spine road was amended in scale and length during the pre-application stage to respect the rural character of Southwater and to reduce harm on the setting of Great House Farmhouse.

- 5.16 A new connection to Two Mile Ash Road is also included in the Proposed Development to create a new connection between Christ's Hospital, Southwater, and Horsham.
- 5.17 HDC is keen to ensure full delivery of the Spine Road at the earliest possible opportunity to reduce pressures on Worthing Road. It has therefore been agreed that the full delivery of the Spine Road could be secured through a 'subject to an occupation'-based trigger.
- 5.18 Further detail of highways pre-application discussions with WSCC are outlined later in this Statement.

Landscape

- 5.19 A Landscape and Visual Baseline Assessment, including ZTV mapping and methodology, was issued to the Council for discussion as part of a pre application meeting on 22 September 2025. The methodology and initial viewpoint selection were deemed acceptable. Further consultation from Ines Watson (Landscape Officer at Horsham District Council) resulted in requests for winter photography, additional viewpoints (including VP 4a and VP 6a), and amendments to several viewpoint positions and orientations. The LVIA has been adapted to respond to this Officer feedback.
- 5.20 The Council also requested additional verified visual montages ('VVMs') to support this application, consequently five VVMs have been prepared in line with LI TGN 06/19 (see Appendix 9.7 of LVIA). Vegetation changes, access related alterations, and other detailed viewpoint adjustments were incorporated as part of the iterative consultation. The VVMs model the maximum outline parameters of the proposed development and as such do not capture detailed design matters such as breaks in the building line, setbacks for estate roads, on plot landscaping, pitched roofs and materials. All VVM locations and viewpoint refinements were agreed with the local authority landscape officer.

Open Space Strategy

- 5.21 Regarding Open Space, the landscape design framework has been adapted in line with the Council's open space standards and the multi-functional green space typologies. The masterplan defines the location, extent, and function of open spaces to meet and exceed quantitative requirements, proving a clear distinction between amenity greenspace, parks and gardens, and natural greenspace.
- 5.22 Amenity greenspaces have also been designed to support informal recreation in accordance with SPD guidance. Areas with a stronger ecological or landscape function are categorised as natural greenspace and form part of a connected green infrastructure network.
- 5.23 Provision for young people is concentrated within the central parkland, close to the school and village centre.
- 5.24 Finally, allotment provision has also been incorporated within the wider open space framework.

Heritage

- 5.25 A reduced quantum/density of development is proposed when compared with the previously submitted scheme to allow greater sensitivity to Great House Farmhouse, the southern edge of the Site as well as the listed buildings along Two Mile Ash Road.
- 5.26 HDC have also expressed a desire for more 'informal uses' within proximity to the Grade II* listed building to preserve the setting, as opposed to formal playing fields.
- 5.27 In response, the playing pitches have been pushed back from the heritage assets, with a greater area of informal public open space provided closer to the building. Moreover, the Spine Road has also been redesigned so it no longer passes in close proximity to Great House Farmhouse.
- 5.28 The Council also recommended pre-application discussions are carried out with Historic England. A summary of these discussions are discussed below.

Pre-Application with West Sussex County Council – Education

- 5.29 On 21st November, following receipt of an Education Toolkit for the Secondary School, WSCC issued a letter confirming – in accordance with their consultation response to the 2022 application - that the proposed location of the school in the unsafeguarded location is acceptable. The letter also advises that a s106 legal agreement is required to ensure that a fully serviced site, benefitting from all utility services and full access, is available for a secondary school upon commencement of development or soon thereafter.
- 5.30 Following receipt of this letter a meeting was held with WSCC on 18th December 2025 to discuss in more detail arrangements for the funding and delivery of the school. In this meeting the acceptability of the proposed location of the secondary school was re-confirmed and delivery arrangements were discussed on an initial basis.

Pre-Application with West Sussex County Council – Highways

- 5.31 Extensive pre-application discussions have been held between Berkeley and WSCC as the Local Highway Authority. As part of this discussion, a Transport Scoping note was submitted to the LHA in August 2025, focusing on the proposed methodology of the Transport, including key junction and trip generation modelling to determine the impacts on both the local and strategic road networks.
- 5.32 Further details on pre-application engagement with WSCC is contained within Appendix A of the accompanying Transport Assessment.

Pre-Application with Historic England

- 5.33 Prior to the submission of this application, Berkeley sought pre-application advice from Historic England ('HE') to discuss the Proposed Development with regard to the reducing the impacts on Great House Farmhouse. A site visit was conducted on 13 November 2025 to discuss the revised proposal.
- 5.34 In a letter dated 8 December 2025, HE acknowledged that the nature of the Proposed Development would inevitably result in a degree of harm to Great House Farmhouse. However, through the provision of a green buffer around the farmhouse, in conjunction with the relocation of the main spine road, Historic England confirmed the positive design changes reduced the overall harm attributed to Great House Farmhouse from a high level of '*less than substantial*' harm to '*just below a mid-level of less than substantial*' harm.
- 5.35 In the letter, HE also confirmed that they recognise a balance needs to be struck between seeking to reduce the harm further and delivery of the strategic allocation by making efficient and effective use of land. The letter is provided as an appendix to ES Chapter 7 – Heritage and Archaeology.

Pre-Application with Southwater Parish Council

- 5.36 On 6 November 2025, Berkeley held a meeting with members of Southwater Parish Council. Attendees included the Chair of the Council, the Chair of the Planning Committee, along with the Council's own Planning Consultant/Advisor. Key topics discussed included sports and recreation, infrastructure and connectivity and the general need for housing.
- 5.37 One of key points of discussion was the proposed neighbourhood centre, with the Parish Council clearly setting out that the neighbourhood centre should not compete with nor detract from Lintot Square. As a result, it is intended that the scale and function of the new neighbourhood centre will be designed in such a way that Lintot Square remains the commercial focal point of Southwater.
- 5.38 Most importantly, the Parish Council set out their default position would be always to revert to the current policies contained within the Southwater Neighbourhood Plan. The requirements of the Neighbourhood Plan have been carefully considered into the design of the Proposed Development. Further details of this are contained within the Planning Assessment section of this Planning Statement.

6. Planning Policy Context

- 6.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires all planning applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 6.2 The adopted development plan and other relevant material considerations (including national planning policy) are identified below.

The Development Plan

- 6.3 The adopted development plan for HDC comprises:
- Horsham District Planning Framework (**'the Local Plan'**) (excluding South Downs National Park) (November 2015);
 - Southwater Neighbourhood Development Plan (**'the Neighbourhood Plan'**) (June 2021); and
 - West Sussex Joint Minerals Local Plan (July 2018, Partial Review March 2021).

The Horsham District Planning Framework

- 6.4 The Local Plan is the overarching planning document for Horsham District, outside the South Downs National Park, covering 2011 to 2031. The Local Plan was adopted in 2015 and is therefore more than 5 years old. The Council is currently preparing a new emerging local plan (discussed further below), which when adopted will replace the Local Plan.
- 6.5 Due to the age of the Local Plan (among other reasons), the spatial strategy in Policy 15, alongside other key policies, are out of date. The plan seeks to deliver 16,000 homes over the plan period, averaging at 800 dwellings per annum (**'dpa'**). This figure is below the current local housing need under the standard method, which identifies a minimum of 1,294 dpa are required (an increase of 494 dpa).
- 6.6 Notwithstanding the age of the plan, some 'development management' policies remain broadly consistent with the current NPPF. Key strategic policies, and other development policies, are identified and addressed later in this Statement as and when relevant.

Southwater Neighbourhood Development Plan

- 6.7 The Neighbourhood Plan was 'made' in June 2021 and forms part of the Council's development plan. It is therefore a key material consideration within the determination of this planning application.
- 6.8 Policy SNP2 (Land West of Southwater) of the Neighbourhood Plan allocates the southern half of the Main Site for the provision of 422-450 new homes, with a minimum of 350 of these units being Use Class C3 and a minimum of 72 units being Use Class C2. A minimum of 8ha of public open space is also required as part of the allocation.

- 6.9 The Neighbourhood Plan is less than 5 years old. Therefore, where there is conflict with the development plan, the provision of NPPF paragraph 14 is capable of being applied in the determination of the application.
- 6.10 However, the Neighbourhood Plan will become older than 5 years in June 2026, which is likely before the determination of this planning application. Should this scenario occur, paragraph 14 of the Framework would not in any event be relevant to the determination of the Proposed Development.
- 6.11 Regardless, key policies within the Neighbourhood Plan, including Policy SNP2, are identified and addressed later in the Planning Assessment section of this Statement.

Other Material Considerations

- 6.12 Key material considerations for the purpose of decision making include the current National Planning Policy Framework (2024), the Draft Consultation National Planning Policy Framework (December 2025), Planning Practice Guidance ('PPG'), the National Design Guide, and Supplementary Planning Documents ('SPD').
- 6.13 Importantly, as previously mentioned, the Council is currently in the advanced stages of preparing its emerging Local Plan. As set out in Paragraph 49 of the NPPF, relevant policies in the emerging Local Plan can carry weight in the decision-making process according to the stage its preparation.
- 6.14 These other material considerations, and their relevance to the Proposed Development, are assessed below.

National Planning Policy Framework

- 6.15 The NPPF (2024) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and explains how these should be applied. It is a primary material consideration in planning decisions; particularly in this case, as it offers more up-to-date policy guidance than the adopted development plan.
- 6.16 Paragraph 7 identifies that '*...the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, including the provision of homes, commercial development and supporting infrastructure in a sustainable manner*'.
- 6.17 Paragraph 8 sets out the three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental, which need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways.
- 6.18 Key sections of the Framework are set out below.

The Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

6.19 Paragraph 11 sets out how the presumption in favour of sustainable development will apply to and decision-taking. For decision taking this means:

*approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay;
or*

‘where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date⁸, granting permission unless:

- i) the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance⁷ provides a strong reason for refusing the development proposed; or*
- ii) any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination⁹’ (emphasis added).*

6.20 Footnote 8 of the Framework clarifies that, for applications involving the provision of housing, the *presumption in favour of sustainable development* (as set out within paragraph 11d of the Framework) is engaged where:

- (...) the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites (with the appropriate buffer as set out in paragraph 78); or
- where the Housing Delivery Test indicates that the delivery of housing was substantially below (less than 75% of) the housing requirement over the previous three years.

6.21 With reference to the above, the Council’s latest Authority Monitoring Report (**AMR**) (December 2025) states that HDC can only demonstrate a self-assessed housing land supply position of **1.7 years**. Moreover, the latest Housing Delivery Test (HDT) results, published December 2024, state that HDC scored **62% delivery against their national housing targets over the last three years**.

6.22 Both these measures mean that Paragraph 11(c) is not applicable. Therefore Paragraph 11(d) is triggered, engaging the presumption in favour sustainable development.

6.23 It is recognised that the Site does contain areas of irreplaceable habitats, areas at risk of surface water flooding, and potential designated heritage assets which are identified as particular areas of importance under footnote 7 of the Framework. However, this statement makes it clear that the application of policies relevant to these areas does not provide a strong reason for refusing the development.

6.24 On this basis, the provisions of Paragraph 11(d)(ii) apply, and the ‘titled balance’ is engaged.

NPPF Paragraph 14

6.25 Paragraph 14 of the Framework sets out that:

“In situations where the presumption (at paragraph 11d) applies to applications involving the provision of housing, the adverse impact of allowing development that conflicts with the neighbourhood plan is likely to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, provided the following apply:

the neighbourhood plan became part of the development plan five years or less before the date on which the decision is made; and

the neighbourhood plan contains policies and allocations to meet its identified housing requirement”.

6.26 It has been established that the presumption in favour of development applies in the determination of this application. However, the Neighbourhood Plan is less than five years old and is capable of engaging Paragraph 14 of the NPPF.

6.27 On this basis, conflict with the neighbourhood plan would be likely to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. The implications of this are discussed in the Section 7 of this Statement.

6.28 However, it is again important to note that the provisions of Paragraph 14 will no longer apply beyond June 2026, where the SNP becomes older than 5 years.

Draft Consultation National Planning Policy Framework (2025)

6.29 On 18 December 2025, the Government published a draft iteration of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Berkeley reserves the right to comment on the implications of the new NPPF in the determination of the Proposed Development once it is formally published.

Planning Practice Guidance

6.30 PPG was first published in March 2014 as an online resource to supplement the Framework. It is a live document and is regularly updated to reflect changes in Government Policy. Section 7 of this Statement addresses element of PPG insofar as they are relevant to the Proposed Development.

The Emerging Local Plan

- 6.31 HDC is preparing a new Local Plan, the Horsham Local Plan 2023-2040 ('the Emerging Local Plan'). The emerging Local Plan was submitted to the Secretary of State for examination on 26 July 2024 following a series of Regulation 18 and 19 consultations in 2020 and 2024 respectively.
- 6.32 Stage 1 Hearings took place in December 2024. On 4 April 2025, the Planning Inspector wrote to HDC recommending the emerging Local Plan be withdrawn. On 18 August, HDC responded to the Inspector requesting the examination be continued and suggesting an additional hearing session to examine HDC's compliance with the Duty to Cooperate, with new evidence. The Inspector responded to the Council on 28th August informing the Council they would consider the new evidence prior to agreeing to resume the examination.
- 6.33 On 11 November 2025, the Council wrote again to the Inspector following a change in position from Natural England withdrawing their water-neutrality based approach with the Sussex North Water Resource Zone, which has exerted a significant influence on shaping the emerging Local Plan. Following this change of position, the Council are confident that they are willing to explore additional sites through modifications to the emerging Local Plan.
- 6.34 On 12 February 2026, a new Inspector (Jonathan Bore MRTPI) wrote to the Council to confirm that the Examination will progress afresh, with new dates for Hearings to be agreed in due course.
- 6.35 The Site is subject of a draft allocation in the emerging Local Plan under draft Policy HA3 for a mixed-use development. An assessment of the Proposed Development against the requirements of draft Policy HA3 is contained in **Appendix 1** of this Statement, demonstrating its compliance with the emerging allocation.

The National Design Guide

- 6.36 The National Design Guide was published in 2021 and sets out the Characteristics of well-designed places and demonstrates what good design means in practice. It forms part of the Government's collection of planning practice guidance documents and should be read alongside PPG section 'design process and tools'.

Planning Policy for Traveller Sites

- 6.37 The Planning Policy for Traveller Sites document was recently updated in 2024 and should be read in conjunction with the Framework. The document sets out specific planning policies for traveller sites and should be considered in both the plan-making and decision-making process.

Supplementary Planning Documents

- 6.38 The development plan is supported by various Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs). SPDs are non-statutory documents, which build upon and provide more detailed advice on policies contained within the development plan. SPDs do not form part of the development plan but are a material consideration in determining planning applications.
- 6.39 SPDs relevant to the determination of this application include:
- Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (2020);
 - Planning Obligations and Affordable Housing (2017);
 - Southwater Parish Design Statement (2011);
 - Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure (2022);
 - Air Quality and Emissions Mitigation Guidance for Sussex (2020); and,
 - West Sussex County Council Guidance on Parking at New Developments (2020).
- 6.40 In addition to the above, HDC recently produced a guidance document, 'Shaping Development in Horsham District (2025)', which was endorsed at Cabinet on 17 September 2025. It was prepared in order to commit the Council to support development to help meet its identified needs in light of an absence of a housing land supply and historic under-delivery.
- 6.41 Paragraphs 5.6 – 5.9 of this document outline how allocated sites within the emerging Local Plan should be considered in the event applications are bought forward prior to the emerging Local Plan being adopted. The Council clearly set out that the proposed site allocations are based on robust assessments and can accommodate sustainable development. This position is supported by the fact that during examination, the Inspector found no concerns with any of the proposed draft allocations.
- 6.42 Therefore, it is expected that the Council will consider proposals on sites within the emerging Local Plan positively.

7. Planning Assessment

7.1 This section assesses the Proposed Development against relevant planning policies set out in the development plan, and any other material planning considerations, having regard to the key themes of the Framework³ as follows:

- Principle of Development
- Delivering a sufficient supply of homes;
- Building a strong and competitive economy;
- Ensuring the vitality of town centres;
- Promoting healthy and safe communities;
- Promoting sustainable transport;
- Making effective use of land;
- Achieving well designed places;
- Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change;
- Conserving and enhancing the natural environment; and
- Conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

7.2 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 sets out a requirement that planning applications are to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless other material considerations indicate otherwise.

7.3 The Development Plan relevant to the planning application comprises the Horsham District Planning Framework ('the Local Plan') (2015), and the Southwater Neighbourhood Plan (2021). The West Sussex Joint Minerals Local Plan (2018) is also relevant to this proposal.

7.4 Material considerations of particular significance to the determination of this planning application include the NPPF, the emerging Horsham Local Plan, and the Shaping Development in Horsham District guidance document. These documents are described in detail in Section 6 of this Planning Statement.

Principle of Development

Adopted Horsham Local Plan - Spatial Strategy and Housing Requirement

Local Plan Policy 1

7.5 Local Plan Policy 1: 'Sustainable Development' iterates the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out in national policy.

³ It is acknowledged that planning policy behind Gypsy and Traveller Sites is contained within the Government's Planning Policy for Traveller Sites. For ease, assessment of Gypsy and Traveller Communities is located under the section 'Need for Housing' as its provision is connected to the delivery of C2 and C3 homes under draft Policy HA3 (2)(a).

7.6 It provides, *inter alia*, that where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application is out-of-date, then the Council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Local Plan Policy 15

7.7 Local Plan Policy 15: 'Housing Provision' sets a housing requirement for Horsham District of '*...at least 16,000 homes and associated infrastructure within the period 2011 – 2031, at an average of 800 homes per annum*'.

7.8 The Housing Requirement is not expressed as a cap to the quantum of development in the District, meaning there is no numerical conflict as a result of the Proposed Development.

7.9 Furthermore, the Council's latest AMR (December 2025) confirms that over the plan period to date (2011 to 2025), a total of +10,463 dwellings have been delivered, against a cumulative minimum target of +11,200. The District is therefore in a cumulative shortfall position of -737 dwellings against the adopted minimum requirement, which requires a step-change in delivery if it is to be met by 2031.

7.10 The Council's latest Housing Land Supply Position (of just **1.7 years**) also indicates the present significant cumulative shortfall is only set to worsen up to 2031.

7.11 In this context, whilst the Site is not specifically identified as part of the Council's anticipated supply to 2031, the proposed additional homes would assist the Council in getting closer to its adopted minimum requirement.

Local Plan Policies 2, 4, and 26

7.12 The Site is located outside of the defined Built Up Area Boundary ('BUAB') of Southwater and therefore is located in the countryside in policy terms. However, the southern part of the Site is allocated for development within the Southwater Neighbourhood Plan (Policy SP2), which is returned to later.

7.13 A partial conflict with Policies 2, 4, and 26 of the Local Plan is acknowledged. The Proposed Development on the land outside of the Neighbourhood Plan allocation would conflict with Policies 2, 4, and 26, owing to its siting outside the BUAB.

7.14 Notwithstanding this partial conflict, the development proposals accord with many of the spatial strategy principles expressed within Policies 2 and 4. This is demonstrated via the proposed allocation for the Site within the emerging Horsham Local Plan (returned to later), which broadly carries forward the existing spatial strategy and articulates it in the present context.

Southwater Neighbourhood Plan (2021)

- 7.15 Policy SNP1 sets out core principles for development within the Neighbourhood Area. The Proposed Development extends beyond the area allocated in the Neighbourhood Plan, this part of the development conflicts with Criteria SNP1.1(b) due to the Site's location outside of the BUAB.
- 7.16 Policy SNP2 allocates the southern portion of the Site for the development of 422-450 new homes (with a minimum of 350 Use Class C3 units and a minimum of 72 Use Class C2 units), alongside the provision of 8ha of public open space. The development proposals align with the requirements of Policy SNP2.2, within the area of the Site that is allocated.
- 7.17 Policy SNP3 safeguards land for a new secondary school. The Proposed Development includes land for a secondary school, albeit in a different location. This technical conflict with Policy SNP3 should be given limited weight, as the secondary school land is still being provided as part of the wider development proposal.

Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

- 7.18 As set out in Section 6, the Development Plan is materially out of date. The Spatial Strategy of the Local Plan is not consistent with the NPPF, being based on an out of date housing need and requirement. The plan is older than 5 years and it is further out of date due to a projected housing land supply of 1.7 years, and the District's latest HDT score of 62%, per Footnote 8 of the NPPF.
- 7.19 The Southwater Neighbourhood Plan is likewise materially out of date, as it was also based on a spatial strategy and housing need that is not consistent with the NPPF. Indeed, the Inspector of the Horsham Golf Club appeal (ref: APP/Z3825/W/24/3355546) confirmed this position in paragraph 58(2) of their decision.
- 7.20 NPPF Paragraph 11(d)(ii) therefore applies, requiring that planning permission should be granted unless:
'...any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination'.
- 7.21 Local Plan Policy 1 reiterates a very similar presumption in favour of sustainable development. Limited weight should be given to conflict with the Development Plan in this context.
- 7.22 On this basis, the principle of development is acceptable.

NPPF Paragraph 14

- 7.23 The Neighbourhood Plan is less than 5 years old, having been adopted in June 2021.
- 7.24 NPPF Paragraph 14 provides that '*...in situations where the presumption (at paragraph 11d) applies to applications involving the provision of housing, the adverse impact of allowing development that conflicts with the neighbourhood plan is likely to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits*' provided certain criteria apply.
- 7.25 Paragraph 14 is not determinative. It allows for situations in which the benefits of development can outweigh conflict with an up to date neighbourhood plan. Indeed, such a position was recently concluded in the planning appeal at Horsham Golf Club (Ref: APP/Z3825/W/24/3355546, paragraph 59).
- 7.26 As noted in the Inspector's decision, the housing requirement for Southwater is not consistent with the terms set out in NPPF paragraphs 69-70 and is out of date such that Paragraph 14 is not engaged. Even in the alternative, the Inspector concluded the benefits of that development would outweigh the conflicts with the Neighbourhood Plan despite the provisions of Paragraph 14.
- 7.27 In respect of the Proposed Development subject of this outline planning application, and in the context of a recognised existing and projected housing shortfall in the district, the substantial benefits of the proposal, as outlined in Section 4 of this Planning Statement, would clearly outweigh any partial conflict with the Neighbourhood Plan. This is returned to in the planning balance at Section 10.

The Emerging Local Plan

- 7.28 The emerging Local Plan is currently at examination. It is a material consideration in the determination of this planning application. The weight attributed to it should be limited at this stage, but this will increase the more the plan progresses through examination.
- 7.29 As set out in Section 6, the Site benefits from a draft allocation for development under Policy HA3. The Proposed Development has been designed in accordance with the draft policy requirements. The draft allocation for the Site, at the sustainable Tier 2 settlement of Southwater, would also secure compliance with draft Policy SP3.
- 7.30 Furthermore, the Council recently endorsed the Shaping Development in Horsham District Planning Advice Note ('PAS'). The document recognises that the proposed site allocations are based on robust evidence and confirms the Council will consider positively proposals on sites identified in the emerging Local Plan which accord with such evidence and other adopted development management policies.
- 7.31 The PAS also confirms, at paragraph 5.12, that development proposals which meet the criteria of Local Plan Policy 4 will be considered positively. The proposals meet those criteria.

7.32 The emerging Local Plan and PAS are important material considerations to the determination of this application. The development proposals are designed to meet the requirements of draft allocation Policy HA3 and should be approved without delay in order to assist in boosting the District's housing supply.

Summary

7.33 The principle of the Proposed Development is acceptable. In summary:

- Part of the Site is allocated for the type of development proposed, under Policy SNP2 of the Neighbourhood Plan. This part of the proposal does not conflict with the development plan.
- Conflicts are acknowledged with Local Plan policies 2, 4, and 28, and Neighbourhood Plan policy SNP1, relating to the Site area beyond the allocation.
- However, both development plan documents are materially out of date, due to:
 - i. Being more than 5 years old, and prepared in a completely different national planning context;
 - ii. the Council's inability to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply, at just 1.7 years;
 - iii. failure to deliver at least 75% of its housing delivery targets, at just 62%.
- The Neighbourhood Plan is likewise out of date, whether due to its housing requirement being inconsistent with the NPPF, and also due to its age after June 2026.
- NPPF Paragraph 14 does not apply. Even if it was to apply, the benefits of the scheme (see Section 4) outweigh the limited conflict.
- The Proposed Development complies with the emerging local plan and delivers development with regard to draft Policy HA3 of the emerging Local Plan.
- The 'Shaping Development for Horsham' SPD sets out that the Council will positively consider proposals submitted on sites identified in the emerging Local Plan.

7.34 Overall, despite its countryside setting, the Site represents a suitable and sustainable location for development within one of the District's most sustainable settlements. The Proposed Development aligns with the strategic allocation set out in emerging Local Plan Policy HA3 and is supported by comprehensive technical evidence to justify compliance with other relevant development management policies contained within both the Development Plan and emerging Local Plan.

Delivering a sufficient supply of homes

Delivery of New Housing

- 7.35 The residential component of this hybrid planning application comprises outline planning permission for approximately 1,000 dwellings (including 35% affordable housing provision). Approximately 80 units of specialist accommodation (Use Class C2) are also proposed, which are considered separately.
- 7.36 The submitted Parameter Plans indicate the developable area required to accommodate this quantum of development. The Design and Access Statement ('DAS') and Illustrative Masterplan demonstrate that approximately 1,000 homes can be delivered at the Site, alongside other key components of the application, within the established Parameters.
- 7.37 The Illustrative Masterplan incorporates a range of house types, including detached, semi-detached, terraced, and flatted properties, across a mix of 1-5 bedroom dwellings, reflective of the Council's evidence of local housing needs.
- 7.38 The provision of 1,000 new homes (Use Class C3) at this sustainable location would assist in redressing the Council's existing identified and projected future significant shortfalls in housing delivery, which requires immediate intervention in order to redress.
- 7.39 The Proposed Development is a draft strategic allocation in the emerging Local Plan for the delivery of approximately 1,000 homes and other infrastructure. Given the existing housing shortfall, this planning application has been submitted in advance of the plan reaching adoption, in order to bring forward the much-needed housing as soon as possible, alongside significant supporting infrastructure.
- 7.40 In any event, given the nature and scale of the proposals and the emerging allocation for the Site, it is clear the District is reliant on the development proposed as part of this application in order to meet its housing needs (and other development needs) over the longer term.
- 7.41 The delivery of housing (Use Class C3) should be afforded **very substantial** weight in favour of the proposed development.

Affordable Housing

- 7.42 In addition to the provision of homes generally, the contribution to the supply of affordable housing in the District is another distinct and important benefit of the proposals.
- 7.43 Policy 16 of the Local Plan sets out that, on sites providing 15 or more dwellings, 35% of these shall be allocated for affordable housing. This requirement is carried through into draft policies HA3 and 39 of the emerging Local Plan. The Proposed Development meets this requirement, equating to the delivery of circa +350 affordable homes.

- 7.44 The affordable homes will be provided in a tenure split that aligns with the Council’s policy requirements. The Council’s latest evidence, which has informed emerging policy 39, identifies the following mix for affordable housing:
- 70% for affordable and social rent; and
 - 30% for affordable home ownership.
- 7.45 The specific mix and distribution of affordable housing will be considered through reserved matters applications. The proposals are therefore compliant with adopted development plan policy.
- 7.46 The Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (‘MHCLG’) Live Table 1008c records that over the previous 10 years (2015/16 – 2024/25), just +1,897 gross new affordable homes have been delivered in Horsham. This is equivalent to just +190 gross new affordable homes per annum.
- 7.47 The Northern West Sussex Strategic Market Housing Assessment (2019) published in support of the Local Plan, sets out in Table 44, that there is a need to deliver a minimum of +503 net new affordable houses per annum in Horsham District.
- 7.48 The provision of +190 affordable units per annum over the last ten-year period represents just 38% of the need for affordable housing. There were 0 recorded completions during the latest period (2024/25). It is therefore evident that there is a chronic need for affordable housing alongside regular market housing.
- 7.49 The record of affordable housing delivery in Horsham is poor. It is likely to be worse once losses of affordable housing stock via the Right to Buy are taken into account. Against this backdrop, MHCLG Live Table 600 records that there are 716 households waiting for appropriate housing on the Council’s Housing Register as of 1 April 2025.
- 7.50 Without a very substantial step change in the supply of affordable housing, there is little hope for households on the Housing Register to have their need for suitable accommodation be met any time soon. In this context, the delivery of up to +350 new affordable homes (35% of the proposed dwellings) as part of the Proposed Development must be given **very substantial** weight in favour of granting planning permission.

Housing Affordability

- 7.51 Datasets published by the Office for National Statistics ('ONS')⁴ confirm that the latest median house price to workplace-based earnings affordability ratio (2024) across Horsham is 11.55. The average over the previous five years is a ratio of 12.85. This means that median house prices in the District are over 10 times that of median workplace-based earnings.
- 7.52 Furthermore, ONS datasets confirm that the same position for Lower-Quartile housing, which is typically representative of affordable housing products, is similarly dire at 11.34. The average over the previous five years is a ratio of 12.55. This means that lower-quartile priced houses are over 11 times that of lower-quartile workplace-based earnings.
- 7.53 Typically, mortgage lenders offer products around 4.5 times household workplace-based earnings. In Horsham, the average median earner will need to find 11.55 times their annual salary in order to purchase the average median value home, which is more than double the typical maximum lending rate.
- 7.54 In this context, it is indisputable that Horsham has and continues to present a housing affordability crisis, exhibiting a marketplace that is failing to provide enough new homes to meet housing needs in terms of affordability. The contribution of up to 1,000 new homes as part of the Proposed Development will assist in redressing these issues, particularly given that 35% of the new homes will be affordable housing.

Older Persons Housing

- 7.55 Policy SNP2 of the Neighbourhood Plan allocates the delivery of at least 72 C2 units as part of the proposed allocation. The Proposed Development includes approximately 80 units to reflect, and modestly exceed, the policy expectations.
- 7.56 Draft Policy HA3 requires the Proposed Development to deliver a mix of C2 and C3 housing. Albeit no specific quantum of C2 housing is specified. The SHMA (2019), at Table 65, indicates a shortfall up to 2039 of some -1,517 specialist accommodation (Use Class C2) units in Horsham District.
- 7.57 The proposed C2 units are located adjacent to the neighbourhood centre to ensure older residents have convenient and sustainable access to the local services and amenities brought forward as part of the wider development.
- 7.58 Overall, the Proposed Development delivers a significant level of C2 accommodation, in line with the requirements of the Neighbourhood Plan Policy SNP2 and the emerging Local Plan policy HA3. The delivery of the specialist accommodation should be given **substantial** weight in the planning balance.

⁴ [House price \(existing dwellings\) to workplace-based earnings ratio - Office for National Statistics.](#)

Housing Mix, Density and Standards

- 7.59 Local Plan Policy 16 and Neighbourhood Plan Policy 2.2 require that residential development provides an appropriate mix of housing sizes and types to meet the District's needs, as evidenced in the latest SHMA. This provision is taken forward in the emerging Local Plan.
- 7.60 Whilst a reserved matter, the Illustrative Masterplan demonstrates that these provisions can be met within the scope set by the Parameter Plans. The DAS confirms that an appropriate mix of housing sizes and standards can be met as part of the proposed development.
- 7.61 In relation to the proposed density of development, it is natural for proposals of this scale to encompass various sub-areas that present different densities. Such areas are indicated on the submitted Parameter Plans, which seek to make the most efficient use of the land across the various parcels within the overall development, taking account of constraints and the character of the area.
- 7.62 For example, the density of residential development to the south of the Site is lower than the north, to reflect the rural setting of Grade II* listed Great House Farmhouse.
- 7.63 Neighbourhood Plan Policy SNP9 provides that all new dwellings should achieve M4(2) of the optional requirements in Building Regulations. These provisions are expected to be secured via an appropriate legal agreement and the proposals are therefore in compliance.
- 7.64 Neighbourhood Plan Policy SNP10 requires that all new dwellings must meet the nationally defined space standards as set out by MHCLG. It also requires that all dwellings have access to adequate private, shared private, or outdoor space. Whilst a reserved matter, the Illustrative Masterplan and DAS demonstrate that these can be accommodated within the scope of the Parameter Plans. The outline development proposals are therefore in compliance.
- 7.65 Further information is available within the submitted DAS.

Gypsy and Traveller Sites

- 7.66 Local Plan Policy 22 acknowledges the provision of Gypsy and Traveller accommodation may be met via windfall sites, providing the criteria of Policy 23 are met. The development proposals have been designed to meet the criteria of Policy 23 and are in compliance. Further detail is set out within the DAS.
- 7.67 Furthermore, Strategic Policy 43 of the emerging Local plan sets out that the Council will seek to meet the identified current and future accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in the District. Five Gypsy Traveller Pitches are identified to be delivered as part of Policy HA3 to assist in meeting this requirement. The Proposed Development will deliver the required 5 pitches.
- 7.68 The Proposed Development complies with development plan policy in respect of Gypsy and Traveller provision. The provision of Gypsy and Traveller accommodation toward the District's needs is another significant benefit of the proposals, which should be given **significant weight** in the planning balance.

Building a strong and competitive economy

- 7.69 NPPF Paragraph 85 sets out significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. This is reflected in Local Plan Policy 7, which promotes economic growth through, inter alia, retaining and identifying new employment areas to meet the needs for appropriate new business activity.
- 7.70 Emerging Local Plan Policy HA3 includes up to 4 hectares of employment floorspace, and a neighbourhood centre to provide appropriate commercial uses. The need for such provision is generated both by the Proposed Development as well as an existing identified need within the District. On-site provision of employment uses will assist in facilitating sustainable travel patterns, creating jobs close to where people live.
- 7.71 The precise mix of uses within both these spaces will be determined at Reserved Matters stage. However, the submitted plans for approval show that the Neighbourhood Centre and Employment hub would be of a scale that reflects the requirements of emerging Local Plan Policy HA3. The space has potential to provide a mix of modern business premises, from flexible space for small enterprises to larger and bespoke units.
- 7.72 The Proposed Development also includes a Primary School, a 60-space nursery, and a Secondary School. It also includes a Use Class C2 specialist accommodation unit. These facilities would also bring forward significant employment opportunities.

- 7.73 The ES submitted in support of this planning application includes a Socio-economic Chapter. This Chapter details that during both the construction and operational phases, the Proposed Development will offer benefits to the economy in terms of jobs created directly on site during both the construction and operational phases.
- 7.74 The Proposed Development would introduce significant new business and employment floorspace, meeting the requirements of draft Policy HA3, and delivering significant opportunity for economic growth and activity during both construction and operational phases. **Significant weight** should be given to the economic benefits of the scheme.

Ensuring the vitality of town centres

- 7.75 Local Plan Policy 12 seeks to ensure the vitality and viability of existing retail centres. It provides that proposals for small scale retail development will be allowed outside defined boundaries where it will not significantly undermine the vitality and viability of the nearest defined town centre.
- 7.76 Emerging Local Plan Policy HA3 requires that the allocated neighbourhood centre uses to be provided within the Site must retain Lintot Square as the primary centre of Southwater.
- 7.77 This planning application is supported by a Retail Impact Assessment ('**RIA**'). The RIA considers the capacity for new floorspace which would be generated by the Proposed Development, the impacts on Lintot Square, and also applies a sequential test to justify its necessity.
- 7.78 Further details can be found in the accompanying RIA. It makes the following conclusions:
- i. The proposed commercial facilities have been guided by a capacity assessment and a demonstrate the right scale for the Proposed Development;
 - ii. The proposed retail facilities will primarily be sustained by the newly resident population of the Proposed Development. Therefore, clear locational circumstances for the proposed facilities to be located at the heart of the new development; and
 - iii. The Proposed Development is unlikely to have any undue impact on existing retailers within the vicinity, this includes existing retailers within Lintot Square.
- 7.79 Overall, the proposed commercial facilities play a key role in the vitality of the new development, whilst ensuring that the role and function of Lintot Square will remain the primary local centre for Southwater. The Proposed Development accords with relevant National and Local policies.

Promoting healthy and safe communities

- 7.80 NPPF Paragraph 96 seeks to promote healthy communities by facilitating social interaction and creating healthy, inclusive communities. Paragraph 101 adds that decisions should promote public safety and take into account wider security requirements by making sure the layout and design of developments are informed by the most up-to-date information available from the police and other agencies.
- 7.81 The Local Plan reflects this through Policies 42 and 43. Policy 42 encourages measures that create socially inclusive communities, while Policy 43 supports new community facilities where they meet identified local needs, as evidenced in the Sport, Open Space and Recreation Study or contribute to Green Infrastructure.
- 7.82 The emerging Local Plan also echoes these aims through similarly worded Policies 27 and 28.
- 7.83 A rapid Health Impact Assessment ('HIA') has been submitted alongside this planning application to identify the impacts on health, taking into account matters such as design, access to open space and nature, and access to health infrastructure. A summary of its conclusions are contained below.

Open Space, Sports and Recreation

- 7.84 The Proposed Development provides a total c.59ha of open space across several typologies. This includes the provision of allotments, multi-functional green spaces, and play areas such as LAPs, LEAPs and a NEAP.
- 7.85 The Open Space provision significantly exceeds Development Plan requirements, which seek the recommendations of the Council's Playing Pitch Strategy Open Space, Sport & Recreation Review 2021, requiring the delivery of 11ha total; and the 8ha required by Neighbourhood Plan Policy SNP2.2.
- 7.86 To promote accessibility and inclusivity, areas of public open space will be designed with regard to 'Making Space for Girls' and accessibility principles. Whilst a reserved matter, a detailed overview of the proposals' potential provision against policy requirements is contained within the DAS.
- 7.87 The Proposed Development incorporates a 5km circular trail for pedestrian and cycle route as required by emerging Policy HA3. This link extends from the Downs Link through the Site and would be supplemented by outdoor fitness areas, play areas and seating.
- 7.88 Furthermore, following pre-application discussions with both HDC and the local community, the Proposed Development provides new outdoor natural turf playing pitches next to Southwater Sports Club. This is in addition to other playing pitches at the proposed secondary school, which could be used by the local community through a community use agreement, once delivered.
- 7.89 Overall, the Proposed Development provides open space, sport and recreational spaces significantly beyond minimum requirements in both the adopted and emerging Local Plan. This is another significant benefit of the development proposals.

Social Infrastructure

- 7.90 The Proposed Development includes the provision of a new neighbourhood centre, comprising up to 2,000sqm of commercial and community floorspace. The proposals also incorporate the sensitive redevelopment of the agricultural buildings adjacent to Great House Farmhouse, which would create an additional area of local community space. Both areas will function as social nodes for the Proposed Development and provide both commercial and community spaces that would support social interactions for Southwater and the surrounding area.
- 7.91 Furthermore, the Proposed Development also includes the provision of a new Secondary School, a Primary School, and a 60-space nursery. The proposed Secondary School, to be delivered by WSCC, will deliver on a long standing aspiration to provide a secondary school in Southwater and meet the future needs for secondary school places in the local area. Both schools and are capable of expansion should the need arise, as required under Policy HA3 of the emerging Local Plan.
- 7.92 Following discussions with HDC and WSCC, it is expected that serviced land for the schools will be transferred to WSCC as part of the first phase of development to respond to the urgent need for educational space. This will be secured by a planning obligation in the Section 106 agreement. Further details are contained within the Draft Heads of Terms set out later in this Planning Statement.
- 7.93 Overall, the Proposed Development delivers sufficient social infrastructure to respond to the needs of both existing and future occupants of Southwater. The provision of a nursery, Primary School, and Secondary School are significant benefits of the scheme.

Promoting sustainable transport

- 7.94 NPPF Paragraphs 115 -117 outline that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, provide safe and convenient access to the highway network, and should first give priority to pedestrian, cycle and public transport. These objectives are reflected in Local Plan Policies 40 and 41, Neighbourhood Plan Policy SNP4, and emerging Local Plan Policy 28.
- 7.95 Emerging Local Plan Policy HA3 requires a comprehensive cycling and walking strategy, taking into account WSCC's walking and cycling strategy (2016-2026). In addition, it requires enhancements to connections to Christ's Hospital to promote sustainable travel, including enhancements to the Downs Link, and a new connection Two Mile Ash Road. The allocation also requires a new link road between the development and Hop Oast Roundabout, as well as other improvements to the existing highway network.
- 7.96 A Transport Assessment ('TA') and Framework Travel Plan ('FTP') has been submitted as part of the associated Access and Transport ES Chapter. A summary of its conclusions is also outlined below.

Site Access

- 7.97 This application includes primary access to the highway as a matter for consideration. For clarity, this comprises the only detailed matter for consideration at this stage. Five points of access are proposed (as set out in Section 4) and will ensure a well-connected development.
- 7.98 Further information on the access arrangements is contained within the TA. The proposed access arrangements, which have been developed in discussion with WSCC and HDC, are acceptable in highways terms and would ensure safe and convenient access to the highway network is achieved.
- 7.99 Pedestrian and Cycle access is also to be provided at the proposed Primary Accesses. Further pedestrian and cycle accesses are achieved via the existing PRoW network, including the Downs Link, ensuring permeability of the development and connectivity to the existing settlement of Southwater.

Locational Sustainability and Sustainable Transport Modes

- 7.100 The Site is in a sustainable location, with good pedestrian, cycle, and public transport connections to key destinations and local facilities, in Southwater, Horsham, and beyond. These are accessible from the Site via sustainable modes of transport; further detail is set out in the TA.
- 7.101 The Site is in proximity to the services and facilities of Southwater, which are within reasonable walking and cycling distance. Active Travel connections to Horsham are also present, and set to be enhanced.
- 7.102 Furthermore, the Proposed Development provides key infrastructure improvements to the local highway network to relieve congestion, enhance connections, and ensure safe and convenient access is achieved to key locations.
- 7.103 There are frequent bus services on Worthing Road connecting the Site to Horsham. The proposals include a contribution to the existing 23 service between Horsham and Worthing, including both an increase in frequency of the service as well as a potential re-routing through the development at school times to facilitate the transport of school children.
- 7.104 Access to Rail connections is available at both Christ's Hospital Station and Horsham Station. Further details on how the Proposed Development promotes enhanced public transport usage is contained within the TA.

Highway Capacity / Junction Impact

- 7.105 The submitted TA provides a robust analysis of the impact of the Proposed Development on both the existing capacity and junction impact on Worthing Road, Two Mile Ash Road, the A24, and the wider Strategic Road Network. The modelling used to inform this assessment has been undertaken following advice received by WSCC as the Local Highway Authority.

- 7.106 The modelling undertaken as part of the TA concludes that with appropriate mitigation measures to Hop Oast Roundabout, the modelled junctions will continue to operate at either equivalent or improved capacity once the development is complete and mitigation measures are delivered.
- 7.107 The highlighted improvements to Hop Oast Roundabout, alongside other offsite mitigation measures, are included as part of the development proposals. Delivery and funding arrangements will be agreed between Berkeley, HDC and WSCC highways during the determination of this application.
- 7.108 No significant impact on junction capacity (with mitigation) is indicated as a result of the proposals. Further details on the impacts of the Proposed Development are contained within the TA.

Active Travel

- 7.109 Active Travel England is a relevant Statutory Consultee for development proposals over 150 dwellings.
- 7.110 The ATE Planning Assessment Toolkit (the 'Toolkit') has been applied to the Proposed Development, assessing key routes to and from the Site. While it identifies that some audited routes would benefit from enhancement, it concludes the Site benefits from a sufficient level of existing active travel connectivity.
- 7.111 The Proposed Development has also been informed by a Walking and Cycling Strategy, as required under Criterion 7(a) of emerging Local Plan Policy HS3. The strategy proposes specific improvements to create and improve walking and cycling routes to connect Horsham and Southwater. The proposals include delivery of new and enhanced routes within the Site, improvements to existing off-site routes to areas such as Christ Hospital, and the provision of a new 5km circular track connecting to the Downs Link.
- 7.112 Further details of Active Travel, the Walking and Cycling Strategy and Public Transport Strategy are contained throughout the planning application package, including the TA and DAS. These two strategies, alongside the provision of good design and landscaping, ensure the Proposed Development will deliver a scheme that suitably provides the means to facilitate active travel.

Parking Strategy

- 7.113 Policy 41(2) of the Local Plan sets out that adequate parking and parking and facilities must be provided within developments to meet the needs of anticipated users. However, the Local Plan does not contain specific parking requirements. Neighbourhood Plan Policy SNP14 provides specific parking requirements, which have been taken into account in the submitted illustrative masterplan.
- 7.114 As the proposal is for outline permission, details regarding the layout and exact numbers of proposed parking spaces, cycle parking spaces, and EV provision, is not indicated in this application, and would be fixed once the exact dwelling quantum and layout is resolved at subsequent Reserved Matters stage.

7.115 The submission of a parking strategy can be secured via an appropriate planning condition. The parking strategy will align with prevailing policy and building regulations requirements at the time of Reserved Matters submissions.

Christ's Hospital station

7.116 The North Site, located to the east of Station Road (at Christ's Hospital railway station), has been identified for potential car park enhancements serving Christ's Hospital railway station.

7.117 Policy HA3 sets out that improved links shall be provided between the development and Christ's Hospital Station to promote sustainable transport. As part of a this, the policy also requires to deliver a new car park and cycle storage facility at the Station.

7.118 However, the vision of the Proposed Development is to promote active modes of transport to access Christ's Hospital station. This is provided through various PRow and Public Transport improvements to Christ Hospital station as detailed within the TA.

7.119 Modelling has therefore been carried out to determine the necessity of enhanced car parking provision. The modelling shows a demand of approximately 87 cars arises from the proposals, which can easily be accommodated within the existing car park.

7.120 The existing car park has capacity both at present and is projected to post-development, based on recent survey work. It is therefore unlikely to be required. A further survey could be undertaken at a point to be agreed with the Council to determine whether the situation changes. If new survey work demonstrates a need for the potential car park enhancements, these can be implemented via Reserved Matters submissions.

7.121 As such, whilst a car park is not currently anticipated as necessary, the applicant has identified a potential indicative arrangement for car parking and bus turning to ensure future flexibility should circumstances require it. This is subject to further discussion with HDC and WSCC.

Summary

7.122 Overall, the TA demonstrates that the Proposed Development would not result in an increased risk to highway safety and would ensure safe access for users of the public highway network. Moreover, the Proposed Development actively promotes sustainable modes of transport, including the enhancements to walking, cycling and public transport networks as per the requirements of policy HA3.

7.123 Overall, the Proposed Development accords with National and Local Planning Policy in this regard.

Achieving well designed places

- 7.124 NPPF Paragraphs 131 and 139 seek to deliver high-quality buildings and places, being key to sustainable development, and looking to improve the character and quality of an area.
- 7.125 PPG (ID: 26-010) states that outline planning applications should set a framework for the preparation and submission of reserved matters proposals, with the possibility of establishing design principles. PPG (ID: 29-011) further states that parameter plans can contribute towards setting the framework and can also allow flexibility through establishing maximum parameters.
- 7.126 Local Plan Policies 19 and 32 of the emerging Local Plan set out that high quality and inclusive design for all development in the district will be required based on a clear understanding of the local, physical, social, economic, environmental and policy context for development.
- 7.127 Specific matters in relation to design, layout, and landscaping, are reserved for consideration as part of future reserved matters applications. Nonetheless, the submitted DAS establishes clear principles for the location of the built development and open spaces, and these are reflected in the submitted parameter plans for approval.
- 7.128 The DAS defines character areas within the development, which are informed by their contextual setting and adjacent assets, including Great House Farmhouse, the Downs Link and Courtland Wood. Six character areas have been defined in total and a summary of their key features are highlighted within the DAS.
- 7.129 The above considerations are exemplified within the accompanying Illustrative Masterplan which sets out one way in which the Proposed Development could come forward. It demonstrates a genuinely landscape and heritage-led approach; retaining and enhancing green infrastructure while delivering well designed residential, commercial and community space to support a sustainable community.
- 7.130 Overall, the Proposed Development responds to existing landscape features to create a unique and attractive sense of space that will deliver inclusive and sustainable communities. The proposal accords with relevant national and local policies relevant to creating high quality design. Further details are contained within the supporting DAS.

Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

Flood Risk and Drainage

- 7.131 NPPF Paragraph 170 states development should be directed away from areas at the highest risk of flooding.
- 7.132 Local Plan Policy 38 sets out that development proposals will follow a sequential approach to flood risk management, giving priority to development sites with the lowest risk of flooding and making required development safe without increasing flood risk elsewhere. The policy then states that where there is potential to increase flood risk, proposals must incorporate the use of sustainable drainage systems ('SuDS') where technically feasible or incorporate water management measures which reduce the risk of flooding and ensure flood risk is not increased elsewhere.
- 7.133 Emerging Local Plan Policy 10 echoes the above, adding that new developments which incorporate SuDS will be supported where it considers amenity value, green infrastructure, local ecological resources including water quality and biodiversity, natural flood management methods, and contributes towards environmental net gain.

Sequential Test

- 7.134 The entire Site is proposed in fluvial Flood Zone 1, the lowest risk of fluvial flooding.
- 7.135 The Site is subject to linear features of medium-high surface water flooding. PPG clarifies that where a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment demonstrates that occupiers and users would remain safe from current and future surface water flood risk for the lifetime of the development without increasing flood risk elsewhere, then the sequential test need not be applied (ID: 7-027).
- 7.136 A site-specific Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy is submitted. It addresses the requirements of both national and local planning policy, demonstrating that the Proposed Development would not increase the risk of surface water flooding both within and beyond the Site. A summary of its conclusions is contained below.
- 7.137 Consequently, the Proposed Development is not subject to the Sequential Test.
- 7.138 In the alternative, evidence supporting the emerging Local Plan (the Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment) demonstrates that the Site passes the sequential test, having been assessed in the context of site availability at a District level.

Surface Water Drainage

- 7.139 This planning application is accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment ('FRA') and Drainage Strategy to also assess the impact on local hydrology receptors, including local watercourses and the foul sewer network.
- 7.140 Firstly, during construction, a CEMP will be implemented along with a localised surface water run-off management system to temporarily manage pollution and flood risk within the Site. This will ensure any impacts on local watercourses are appropriately mitigated.
- 7.141 In regard to surface water drainage, the Proposed Development has been designed through Surface Water Drainage Strategy which is designed to accommodate surface water run-off for all events up to and including the 1 in 100-year period plus climate change. This strategy includes the provision include attenuation storage ponds and detention basins, some of which will be permanently wet to provide additional amenity value and potentially enhance biodiversity.

Foul Drainage

- 7.142 Finally, in regard to Foul Drainage, permanent connection applications are to be made to the Southern Water sewer networks subject to confirmation of capacity prior to any connection being made.

Summary

- 7.143 Overall, the Proposed Development has followed a sequential approach through directing areas to the lowest risk of flooding. The Proposed Development has also been informed by a robust surface water and foul water drainage strategy to ensure that the Proposed Development would not result in an increased risk of flooding either on or off site. The Proposed Development therefore complies with relevant planning policy.

Energy and Sustainability

- 7.144 NPPF Paragraph 164(b) states that development should be planned for in ways that can help reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This is reflected in Local Plan Policy 37 and Emerging Local Plan Policy 8.
- 7.145 Local Plan Policy 36 requires all applications for residential or commercial development must include an Energy Statement. Such a statement is submitted.
- 7.146 Furthermore, emerging Policy HA3 requires proposals must demonstrate the delivery of net zero carbon, including demonstrating a fabric first approach to the construction of built development, and maximum use of on-site renewable energy technologies.

7.147 In accordance with the requirements of the adopted Local Plan and emerging Local Plan, this planning application is accompanied by an Energy Statement and Sustainability Statement. These statements set out key strategies that will be adopted to ensure compliance with national and local planning policy. A summary of the conclusions is below:

- All non-residential/commercial units will be designed and built to achieve BREEAM 'Excellent' Rating.
- The development will target a reduction in carbon emissions beyond Building Regulations Part L.
- Water efficiency measures will be installed in all dwellings to target a maximum internal daily water consumption of 110 litres/person/day
- The development will be gas free to meet policy standards.
- Energy efficiency measures will be incorporated at design stage, considering building fabric, form factor and unit orientation.

7.148 However, as set out in the accompanying energy strategy, the delivery of zero-carbon homes is only realistic once the national electricity grid is fully de-carbonised. This is not expected at any point in the 2020s or 2030s. Regardless, appropriate measures have been adopted to demonstrate sustainable construction insofar as is realistically achievable.

7.149 Further detail of policy compliance is contained in the submitted reports. Overall, the Proposed Development will incorporate sustainable design measures to promote sustainable construction in accordance with the policies contained within the Development Plan.

Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

7.150 The accompanying ES contains chapters regarding both landscape and ecology. It also contains technical evidence regarding noise, air quality and ground contamination as set out in the Framework. These are discussed below.

Landscape

7.151 NPPF Paragraph 187(a) states decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by (amongst other measures) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes. This is echoed in Local Plan Policy 25 and emerging Local Plan Policy HA3.

7.152 The Site is not in a valued landscape. Regardless, the Proposed Development has adopted a strong landscape-led approach and demonstrates significant improvements beyond the previously withdrawn submission in terms of landscape impact.

7.153 To support the adopted landscape-led approach, a comprehensive Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment ('LVIA') has been undertaken (presented in the associated ES Chapter) to assess the effects of the Proposed Development. Full details of the anticipated landscape and visual impacts, together with the proposed mitigation measures, are set out within the ES.

- 7.154 The Landscape ES Chapter concludes the contextual landscape and site setting are limited to the immediate surroundings of the Site, and that there are no views of local or strategic importance identified in policy terms. The assessment confirms that the Proposed Development would broadly maintain the character of the receiving landscape and would minimise landscape and visual effects on wider receptors.
- 7.155 Notwithstanding the above, the Landscape ES Chapter identifies that, during the construction phase, the Proposed Development would result in major, moderate, minor, and negligible adverse effects on the Site itself and the visual amenity of the immediate landscape.
- 7.156 However, once mitigation measures are implemented and the development becomes operational, the level of effect reduces. A major adverse effect is concluded to the Site's land use, with the remaining effects considered to be moderate, minor, and negligible adverse. A moderate beneficial effect is also identified.
- 7.157 Notably, the Landscape ES Chapter concludes that such effects are largely confined to the Site itself and its immediate context. In this regard, the effects are limited in extent due to the proposed embedded landscaping mitigation, and localised due to the Site's degree of containment.
- 7.158 The arising landscape harm in this context represents that which would be inevitable as part of any development proposal introducing development to existing greenfield land. To meet its substantial housing needs, the Council has accepted that it will need to develop greenfield land, demonstrated via the proposed allocations in the emerging Local Plan (including this site).
- 7.159 Overall, some degree of landscape and visual harm is inevitable given the nature of the Proposed Development. However, the identified effects are localised to the immediate setting of the Site and would be significantly mitigated through the proposed measures. Accordingly, it is considered that any residual landscape harm should attract **moderate weight** in the planning balance.

Agricultural Land

- 7.160 NPPF Paragraph 187(b) provides that planning policies and decisions should recognise the benefits of Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land ('BMV'). BMV is identified as Land in grades 1, 2 and 3a of the Agricultural Land Classification ('ALC').
- 7.161 This planning application is supported by an Agricultural Land Assessment (see ES Chapter 14). The report concludes that the entire Site does not qualify as BMV Land. The Proposed Development would therefore not result in the loss of any BMV agricultural land.

Arboriculture

- 7.162 Local Plan Policies 31, 33, and 34 provide that proposals are expected to retain and enhance existing trees to accords with the objectives of the Council's Green Infrastructure Strategy.
- 7.163 The Proposed Development has been informed tree surveys and arboricultural input from the outset. The Parameter Plans and associated illustrative layout has been designed to retain important ancient woodland, veteran trees alongside the majority of field boundary trees and hedgerows.
- 7.164 Across the Site, the vast majority of existing trees and hedgerows are retained. All trees that are to be removed are limited to either category C1 or B2 contained within the accompanying Arboricultural Impact Assessment (see ES Chapter 8) and are of either limited or moderate arboricultural value.
- 7.165 The protection of retained trees, woodland and hedgerows can be secured through the provision of a detailed Arboricultural Method Statement. The submission of this statement can be secured by use of a standard planning condition.
- 7.166 Neighbourhood Plan Policy SNP18 sets out that development proposals should produce measurable enhancements to the treed environment. It further adds that major development must provide a minimum of one new tree per 40m² of floor space created.
- 7.167 This application is for outline permission only, with all matters reserved save for access. Consequently, it is not possible to confirm the floorspace generated by the Proposed Development at this stage. Albeit it can be assumed that some 2,500 – 3,000 trees would be required on these terms.
- 7.168 The submitted illustrative masterplan and associated landscaping strategy (detailed within the DAS) indicate that policy requirements can be met in relation to tree planting. Delivery of these trees can be secured at Reserved Matters application stages.
- 7.169 The policy requirement will be met through a combination of advanced and instant planting, coordinated with the phasing of development, rather than being imported from elsewhere. This is intended to maximise the ecological value of planting on-site, and represents good arboricultural practice to ensure planted trees establish well.
- 7.170 Overall, the Proposed Development will appropriately ensure the retention and protection of high-quality trees and will deliver substantial enhancements through additional planting. In this respect, the Proposed Development complies with planning policy.

Biodiversity

- 7.171 Local Plan Policy 31 sets out that development proposals will be required to contribute to the enhancement of existing biodiversity and should create and manage new habitats where appropriate.
- 7.172 ES Chapter 8 (Ecology) has been prepared to inform the Proposed Development. It considers potential effects on designated sites as well as habitats and species using the Site. A summary of its conclusions is contained below.

Habitats

- 7.173 The Site comprises several habitats typical of countryside locations, including arable fields, grassland fields, woodland, streams and hedgerows. The following designated habitats (including irreplaceable habitats) located within or near the Site are identified below.
- 7.174 Six veteran trees are present within the main Site and three of the woodlands are included on Natural England's Ancient Woodland Inventory, namely Courtland Wood (contiguous with Two Mile Ash Gill), and Smiths Copse. Courtland Wood is also designated as a non-statutory Local Wildlife Site ('LWS').
- 7.175 The Sparrow Copse LWS is also located within the Northwest Site by Christ Hospital Railway Station.
- 7.176 Internationally designated areas located in proximity of the Site include:
- The Mens Special Area of Conservation ('SAC') located 10.8km south-west of the Site; and
 - The Arun Valley SPA/SAC/Ramsar which is located 12.5km to the southwest of the Site.
 - Three biological Sites of Special Scientific Interest ('SSSI') are located within 5km of the Site;
 - Four further LWSs are located within 2km of the Site, the closest of which is the Southwater Country Park Complex LWS located approximately 550m to the south-east of the Site.
- 7.177 Further detail in relation to habitats present on-site, associated potential for fauna populations, and potential impacts on other sites of ecological value is set out in the Ecology ES Chapter.

Proposed Mitigation and Enhancement

- 7.178 In the short term, the Proposed Development would result in limited adverse and beneficial effects on local habitats. A detailed Construction Environmental Management Plan ('CEMP') can be secured by condition to ensure that any potential impacts are appropriately minimised.
- 7.179 The Proposed Development has been designed to retain and protect key habitats. All areas of ancient woodland and veteran trees would be retained and afforded at least a 15m buffer from development in accordance with Natural England advice. The majority of hedgerows would also be retained and enhanced; where this is not possible, replacement hedgerow planting would be provided.

- 7.180 The landscape parameters also provide opportunities to create new terrestrial habitats of high ecological value within areas currently of limited ecological interest. New wetland features and complementary habitats can be delivered in association with the Site drainage strategy. Collectively, these measures would provide ecological enhancements and maintain the overall nature conservation value of the Site for a range of species.
- 7.181 A comprehensive summary of these mitigation and enhancement measures are identified within the accompanying ES Chapter.
- 7.182 Overall, the Ecology ES Chapter concludes that, subject to the implementation of appropriate mitigation measures, the Proposed Development would not result in any significant adverse effects on local habitats or fauna and indeed provides some beneficial effects. The Proposed Development is compliant with policy.

Biodiversity Net Gain

- 7.183 The Environment Act 2021 mandates that all new developments in England, except for small sites, must deliver at least a 10% increase in BNG. Whilst this is covered under separate legislation, it is necessary that the development provides at least a +10% net gain.
- 7.184 The Proposed Development will deliver a minimum +10% net gain in accordance with legislation. The Proposed Development would deliver a significant benefit to the local natural environment in this respect.

Noise

- 7.185 Policy 24 of the adopted Local Plan provides that developments will be expected to minimise exposure to noise pollution. This is reflected in emerging Policy 11 of the emerging Local Plan.
- 7.186 ES Chapter 10 considers the impact from and to the Proposed Development in respect of noise and vibration. It concludes that the Proposed Development will result in adverse effects on nearby receptors during the construction phase, though these will be temporary in nature. Such effects will be effectively minimised subject to the implementation of an approved CEMP, which can be secured via condition.
- 7.187 During the operational phase, the assessment identifies potential for significant adverse effects due to road traffic noise. However, due to limitations of the strategic highway model, as noted in the ES, the traffic modelling does not reflect the existing baseline future (2036) position at Chessall Avenue. In reality, it is considered likely that any effect would be non-significant in EIA terms. A condition is recommended to secure a more detailed noise assessment at reserved matters stage in this area.
- 7.188 In any event, additional mitigation measures could be applied as part of subsequent Reserved Matters applications to minimise these effects further. For example, the introduction of a 20 mile per hour speed limit within the Proposed Development area.

7.189 Therefore, subject to a condition requiring the submission of a CEMP setting out appropriate mitigation measures during construction, and further details of mitigation to be secured at Reserved Matters stage, the Proposed Development would comply with relevant planning policy.

Air Quality

7.190 As above, Policy 24 of the adopted Local Plan also sets out that developments will be expected to minimise exposure to air pollution. This is echoed in emerging Policy 11 of the emerging Local Plan.

7.191 ES Chapter 6 considers the impacts from and to the Proposed Development in respect of Air Quality. Subject to the implementation of an approved CEMP, the Proposed Development will result in negligible residual effects on human and ecological receptors during construction. Once operational, modelled road traffic generation would have negligible residual effects, regardless of mitigation measures.

7.192 Therefore, subject to a condition requiring the submission of a CEMP setting out appropriate mitigation measures during construction, the Proposed Development would comply with relevant planning policy.

Ground Contamination

7.193 Local Plan Policy 24(2) sets out that development should be appropriate to its location, taking account of ground conditions and land instability.

7.194 Chapter 14 of the ES contains a Ground Conditions and Contamination preliminary risk assessment. The assessment has been informed by a virtual desk study, site visit and preliminary site investigation.

7.195 Potential sources of contamination have been identified, which will require further assessment and potential for mitigation to be agreed as part of future Reserved Matters applications. The Main Site is at risk from contamination due to the existing agricultural use of the land. The North Site is also at risk from contamination due to its presence of railway infrastructure.

7.196 Overall, the assessment concludes that no residual effects will remain once development is complete. During the construction phase of development, further mitigation measures may be required to ensure that any identified impacts are suitably mitigated. The details of these mitigation measures can be established via a detailed Construction Environmental Management Plan, which can be secured via a planning condition.

Minerals - West Sussex Joint Minerals Plan

7.197 The Site is located within a Minerals Safeguarding Area ('MSA') as designated by the West Sussex Joint Minerals Plan (2018 – Partial Review 2021). The Site includes Weald Clay Formation (brick clay resource) and Horsham Stone (building stone).

- 7.198 A Minerals Resource Assessment has been submitted with this planning application, which demonstrates that the Site is not viable for commercial extraction. Furthermore, existing and allocated sites for the relevant resources indicate a sufficient reserve for up to 25 years. The need for the proposed development (which includes, *inter alia*, new homes and critical education infrastructure) clearly outweighs the limited value of safeguarding the land.
- 7.199 The emerging allocation of the Site (Policy HA3), for the development proposed in this planning application, demonstrates the Council has likewise concluded the overriding need for the development outweighs the safeguarding of the mineral.
- 7.200 Therefore, the test at Policy M9 (iii) is passed, meaning there is no conflict.

Waste – West Sussex Waste Local Plan (2014)

- 7.201 The northern extent of the Site is located within a consultation buffer zone for existing waste infrastructure; namely, the Hop Oast / Horsham Household Waste Recycling Site).
- 7.202 The submitted Transport Assessment demonstrates that the Proposed Development would not prevent or prejudice the use of this existing waste management site. Policy W2 of the West Sussex Waste Local Plan is therefore not engaged.
- 7.203 Even in the alternative, the Proposed Development would pass on the basis of Policy W2 Criterion (3) in any event. Policy W2(3)(c) provides that development is acceptable where the redevelopment of the site or loss of the infrastructure would form part of a strategy of scheme that has wider social and/or economic benefits that clearly outweigh the retention of the site or the infrastructure for waste use.

Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

- 7.204 Paragraph 212 of the Framework states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.
- 7.205 Paragraph 215 states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.
- 7.206 These requirements are reiterated within Local Plan Policy 34 and emerging Local Plan Policy 21.
- 7.207 Great House Farmhouse, a Grade II* Listed building, is located to the south of the Site. Emerging Local Plan Policy HA3 makes specific reference to this and requires any forthcoming development to recognise and respect the setting of the designated heritage asset and should include consideration of a sustainable future for the building that is compatible with the desire to preserve its special interest.

7.208 This application is accompanied by detailed heritage and archaeology statements which assesses the harm of the Proposed Development on Great House Farmhouse, as well as other identified designated heritage and non-designated heritage assets. A summary of its findings is contained below.

Heritage

- 7.209 The Site envelopes (but does not include) one Grade II* listed building, Great House Farmhouse. Within the Site there are a group of barns associated with Great House Farmhouse, three of which are regarded as an interconnected, non-designated heritage assets. The built heritage importance of Great House Farmhouse and its rural, medieval landscape setting is at the forefront of the design thinking for the Proposed Development and has been a key issue which the latest proposals have sought to address compared to the previous withdrawn application.
- 7.210 The Built Heritage Assessment concludes the Proposed Development would, at most, result in a lower level of '*less than substantial harm*', principally arising from the loss of rural openness within the mid or wider settings of the identified heritage assets. This conclusion is echoed by Historic England in its pre-application advice letter, appended within the Heritage Assessment.
- 7.211 A detailed list of identified heritage assets and the level of harm attributed to their setting by the Proposed Development is contained within the assessment. A low level of '*less than substantial*' harm is identified to several further Grade II Listed buildings, and a low level of harm to several non-designated heritage assets as a result of the proposals, along Two Mile Ash Road, Worthing Road, Church Lane, Christ's Hospital, and further south of the Site.
- 7.212 Some harm to the setting of many of these heritage assets, including the Grade II* Listed Great House Farmhouse is inevitable as part of the introduction of development to presently undeveloped land. Such effects have been considered as part of the Southwater Neighbourhood Plan which nonetheless allocates this area of the site for development, acknowledging that some extent of harm is tolerable.
- 7.213 However, the Proposed Development would also deliver a range of specific heritage benefits towards Great House Farm. This includes the demolition of the larger, unsympathetic modern barns close to the Farmhouse and the wider redevelopment of the Site into a repurposed community area, returning the more historic agricultural buildings (if feasible) to a viable use. Securing long-term use for the three barns of local interest offers a heritage benefit, conserving their individual interest, as well maintaining the positive contribution they make to the setting of Great House Farm.
- 7.214 Overall, from a heritage perspective the Proposed Development at most would result in a low level of less than substantial harm to the setting of several nearby designated heritage assets. The NPPF therefore allows for the Proposed Development to be granted provided the benefits of the outweigh this harm. This assessment is carried out later in this Statement.

Archaeology

- 7.215 Local Plan Policy 34(8) sets out that applications for development will be required to ensure appropriate archaeological research for both above and below ground archaeology. This is echoed in emerging Local Plan Policy SP21(1)(f).
- 7.216 The Site has been assessed by comprehensive desk-based assessment and a robust programme of geophysical surveys. These surveys conclude the Site has a moderate to high archaeological potential.
- 7.217 The reports conclude that further assessment and investigations will be required to determine the significance of the impact. As part of this, the Site will be subject to a range of archaeological mitigation options to inform the scope and timing of further archaeological fieldwork.
- 7.218 It is intended that no construction phase work will commence prior to the completion of an agreed scope and programme of archaeological investigation and reporting. This provision can be secured by an appropriate planning condition attached to the granting of any consent.
- 7.219 Subject to this condition, no significant archaeological effects are anticipated because all archaeological evidence present within the Site will have either been professionally excavated and removed, or preserved on Site through sympathetic design and preservation measures
- 7.220 In accordance with the above, the Proposed Development complies with Local Plan Policy 34(8).

NPPF Paragraph 215 Balance

- 7.221 NPPF Paragraph 215 provides that: *'...Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal'*.
- 7.222 An assessment of the *harms vs. benefits* must therefore be undertaken to enable a planning judgement to be made as to whether planning permission should be granted.
- 7.223 A range of weighty public benefits are associated with the Proposed Development (including heritage benefits relating to the setting of the Grade II* Listed Great House Farmhouse). These benefits significantly outweigh the *less than substantial* harm (at the lower end) to the listed buildings within the Site's vicinity, when assessed against the policies of the Local Plan and the NPPF read as a whole.
- 7.224 Thus, the benefits resulting from the development both facilitate and require that planning permission should and can be granted in accordance with Paragraph 215 of the NPPF. The principle of development is therefore supported by the 'public benefits' test in this case. Given that the principle of development is acceptable on the terms of national policy, there is no conflict found with the Development Plan as a result of the Proposed Development on this matter.

8. Affordable Housing Statement

- 8.1 Local Plan (2015) Strategic Policy 16 requires that on sites of 15 or more dwellings, 35% must be affordable and should be delivered on site in the first instance. In respect of a mix of housing sizes, types, and tenures, Policy 16 requires that this is provided in accordance with evidence presented in the Council's latest Strategic Housing Market Assessment.
- 8.2 Emerging Local Plan Policies 39(1)(c) HA3 also require 35% affordable housing on self-contained units. Policy 39 also provides that at least 70% of all affordable homes will comprise social and affordable rent, with the remaining 30% to be low-cost ownership homes which could include shared ownership and First Home schemes. Alternative mixes will only be considered if they are robustly evidenced.
- 8.3 The proposed C2 units will not be self-contained units, and therefore there is no required affordable housing provision. The affordable housing provision will only apply to C3 units. This has been agreed with the Council at pre-application stage.
- 8.4 In accordance with both adopted and emerging policy, 35% of the proposed C3 dwellings (equivalent to approximately 350 homes) will be affordable homes. As this application is for outline permission, the exact mix of sizes, types, and tenure of the affordable homes will be confirmed through the reserved matters stages to allow the proposals to best respond to housing need and meet demand. However, an indicative affordable housing tenure and mix is set out in the Design and Access Statement which is in line with the mix specified in the draft Local Plan.
- 8.5 Affordable housing will be dispersed throughout the Proposed Development and integrated with the market housing, in small clusters. This will support a mixed community whilst allowing for efficient management arrangements in line with the requirement of Registered Providers. Mechanisms for securing affordable housing will be set out within the Section 106 agreement.

9. Section 106 and Draft Heads of Terms

Introduction

- 9.1 The following Draft Heads of Terms have been prepared following pre-application discussions between the Council and Berkeley. This section has been prepared with regard to the Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2024⁵ ('IDP') and CIL Charging Schedule.

Community Infrastructure Levy

- 9.2 The Council is a CIL charging authority. The Council's CIL Charging Schedule⁶ came into effect on 1 October 2017 and sets out the following levy rates for the District. These rates are index-linked.
- 9.3 The Regulation 123 List of the Council's CIL Charging Schedule (2017) sets out Infrastructure Projects or Types to be funded at least in part by CIL. It also identifies specific exclusions to be funded by Planning Obligations (i.e. through a S106), S278 Agreements, or other sources of funding.

Infrastructure Schedule

- 9.4 The following infrastructure will be funded via a combination of CIL and/or Section 106 obligations, subject to further discussion. The Council has accepted that no double counting should occur between CIL and Section 106 contributions. This should inform the approach to be agreed in due course.

Public Services

- 9.5 Including Healthcare, Sussex Police and WSCC Fire and Rescue, strategic recycling and waste facilities, and local libraries, subject to evidence base.

Affordable Housing

- 9.6 35% affordable housing, comprising a tenure mix of 70% affordable / social rent, and 30% shared ownership, will be delivered subject to any future Local Plan evidence base review and / or the latest evidence of need and market demand.
- 9.7 The affordable housing unit mix will be subject to Reserved Matters stage taking into account any future Local Plan evidence base review or latest evidence of need and market demand.

⁵ Horsham District Council (2024) *Horsham District Council Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2024*. Available at: [Horsham District Council Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2024](#)

⁶ Horsham District Council (2017) Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule.

Specialist Accommodation (Use Class C2)

- 9.8 Up to 80 extra care units / care home, subject to any future Local Plan evidence base review and / or the latest evidence of need and market demand. These units are not expected to be self-contained and are therefore exempt from affordable housing contribution.

Gypsy and Traveller Pitches

- 9.9 Provision of a maximum of five permanent gypsy and traveller pitches on site, prior to the occupation of 400 dwellings.
- 9.10 Not to occupy or permit Occupation of the Gypsy and Traveller Pitches Site until a Gypsy and Traveller Pitches Management Scheme has been submitted to and approved by the Council.

Access and Transport

- 9.11 Specified on-site highways and access arrangements, including relevant trigger points, as identified within the TA, are anticipated to be controlled via condition and s278 agreements.
- 9.12 Provision of improvements to the on-site Public Rights of Way network, as required and identified through the Transport Assessment, or any future updates and subject to discussions with WSCC. To be determined via subsequent Reserved Matters applications.
- 9.13 Provision of pedestrian / cycle route improvements (or alternatively a financial contribution to WSCC) towards Christs Hospital Station, as required and identified through the Transport Assessment and subject to discussion with WSCC. To be delivered in accordance with the Phasing Plan.
- 9.14 Provision of enhancements to Christ Hospital Station Car Park, subject to a needs assessment and if future demand requires as demonstrated through a Transport Assessment, and subject to discussions with WSCC. The assessment of capacity will be undertaken prior to the occupation of 500 dwellings.
- 9.15 A financial contribution toward Public Transport Infrastructure; including toward local bus services, as required and identified through the Transport Assessment, or any future updates, and subject to discussions with WSCC.
- 9.16 Preparation and approval of a residential and workplace travel plan.

Education

- 9.17 Provision of a serviced plot of land (levelled, with construction access and services up to the boundary) to WSCC for a primary school, where it is required to mitigate the demand for places generated by the development. The school would be delivered by WSCC at its own cost. If the school is not delivered by date (to be agreed) from the initial transfer of land, the land would revert to the developer for a mixed-use development.
- 9.18 Provision of a serviced plot of land (levelled, with construction access and services up to the boundary) to WSCC for a secondary school, where it is required to mitigate the demand for places generated by the development and meet wider needs. The school would be delivered by WSCC at its own cost. If the school is not delivered by date (to be agreed) from the initial transfer, then the land would revert to the developer for a mixed-use development.

Recreational and Sports Facilities

- 9.19 Delivery of sports pitches, with associated pedestrian and cycle access prior to the first occupation of 250 dwellings. Details of the pitches to be agreed as part of the Reserved Matters.
- 9.20 Delivery of NEAP, LEAPs, and LAPs relevant to each phase.
- 9.21 Provision of 0.43ha of designated allotment space.
- 9.22 Management arrangements will be set out in the Section 106 agreement.

Neighbourhood Centre and Great House Farmhouse Community Facility

- 9.23 Provision of community space within the Neighbourhood Centre, and the redevelopment of the agricultural barn, subject to feasibility, with potential construction of a new building within the defined Great House Farm barns area, with associated car parking and access. Details of the spaces to be agreed as part of the Reserved Matters.

Green Infrastructure

- 9.24 Provision of multi-functional green spaces on site in accordance with relevant reserved matters approvals.
- 9.25 The transfer of multi-functional green space to a Management Company prior to the occupation of 80% of the residential properties in each phase.

Biodiversity Net Gain

- 9.26 A minimum +10% biodiversity net gain to be provided on-site or off-site or a combination of both.

10. Planning Balance / Conclusion

- 10.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that all planning applications are determined in accordance with the development plan unless there are material considerations which indicate otherwise.
- 10.2 A significant extent of the Site is allocated for development under Policy SNP2 of the Southwater Neighbourhood Plan. This element of the proposals is in accordance with the development plan.
- 10.3 The entire Site is proposed for allocation under Policy HA3 of the emerging local plan. The Proposed Development has been designed to meet the requirements of both Southwater Neighbourhood Plan Policy SNP2 and the allocation under Policy HA3 of the emerging Local Plan.
- 10.4 The emerging Local Plan has been prepared by the Council and submitted to the Secretary of State for Examination. The Shaping Development in Horsham District Planning Advice Note reiterates the Council's commitment to positively considering development proposals brought forward in compliance with the draft allocations.
- 10.5 The delivery of this Site is critical to meeting the District's existing and future development needs, for both housing and employment land. The Proposed Development would deliver a substantial range of public benefits, including:
- Approximately 1,000 new homes, of which up to 350 will be affordable homes;
 - Specialist accommodation comprising up to 80 extra care/care home units;
 - 5 Gypsy and Traveller pitches;
 - A new local neighbourhood centre, comprising 2,000sqm of commercial and community floorspace (designed to complement and not compete with Lintot square);
 - Approximately 4 hectares of business/employment floorspace;
 - A Primary School, a 60-space nursery, and a secondary school;
 - Approximately 59 hectares of new public open space, including multi-functional green spaces, sports pitches, children's play areas, and a 5km walking/cycling loop;
 - Redevelopment/enhancement of the agricultural buildings adjacent to Great House Farm House;
 - Significant capital investment in the area, with job creation during the construction of the Site and its ongoing operational management, and the local economic contribution of future residents;
 - A suite of off-site enhancements to the local pedestrian, cycle, public transport, and highway networks; and
 - Biodiversity Net Gain of at least +10%.
- 10.6 To assist the Council in meeting its development needs, and demonstrating a forward-looking housing land supply, this application is being brought forward in advance of the adoption of the emerging Local Plan. Consequently, the policies most important in determining the application are those contained within the adopted Development Plan.

- 10.7 However, the housing elements of the adopted development plan are demonstrably out of date, and rendered out of date by the Council's present substantial housing land supply shortfall and Housing Deliver Test results. As such, the tilted balance at paragraph 11 of the NPPF is engaged. This *presumption* is further reflected in the adopted development plan, within Local Plan Policy 1.
- 10.8 There are no policies of the NPPF that protect areas or asset of particular importance that provide a strong reason for refusing the development (including heritage matters, to which we return later in this section). As such, the tilted balance at paragraph 11(d)(ii) of the NPPF is engaged such that permission should be granted unless the adverse impacts significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.
- 10.9 The adverse impacts of the Proposed Development are limited and consistent with those generally of the development of any greenfield site for housing (i.e., impacts that are inherent to the delivery of housing / affordable housing) - something that is clearly needed in the District.
- 10.10 Principally, these impacts relate to limited landscape harm (albeit to an undesignated landscape and largely limited to impacts on the Site itself) and heritage impacts, albeit at the lower end of less than substantial harm (that can be mitigated by the development proposals). The impacts in relation to both landscape and heritage have been materially reduced since the previous withdrawn planning application.
- 10.11 Applying the heritage balance at paragraph 215 of the NPPF, it is evident that the public benefits of the Proposed Development clearly outweigh any low level of heritage harm.
- 10.12 Much of the landscape and heritage harm relates to the development in the southern extent of the Site, which is in any event allocated under Southwater Neighbourhood Plan Policy SNP2 and considered acceptable in this regard.
- 10.13 Applying the tilted balance at NPPF paragraph 11(d)(ii), it is clear that the adverse impacts of the Proposed Development are limited and do not outweigh, let alone significantly and demonstrably, the substantial range of public benefits. On this basis, planning permission should be granted without delay.

Appendix 1 – Emerging Local Plan Policy HA3 Compliance Table

Policy Criterion	Requirement	Policy Compliance	Commentary
2a	1000 homes (C2 and C3) 35% affordable 5 Gypsy Traveller Site	Yes	<p>The Proposed Development would deliver up to 1,000 homes (Use Class C3), of which 35% (up to 350 actual) will be affordable. The mix is yet to be determined but will reflect the Council’s latest evidence.</p> <p>Up to 80 specialist accommodation units (Use Class C2) are proposed in accordance with the requirements of Policy SNP2. No C2 units will be eligible for affordable housing as they will not be self-contained units.</p> <p>5 Gypsy Traveller Pitches are proposed.</p>
2b	A neighbourhood centre offering appropriate uses, including leisure, sports facilities, and retail whilst retaining Lintot Square as the primary centre of Southwater.	Yes	<p>A neighbourhood centre is proposed, up to 2,000 sqm GIA floorspace. Its scale has been designed to complement and not compete with Lintot square.</p> <p>The farm buildings of Great House Farmhouse will also be repurposed to form a new community space. The exact uses, scale and feasibility of reusing existing buildings will be considered further at reserved matters stage.</p> <p>Sports pitches are located to the south of the Site.</p> <p>Additional pitches will be located within the proposed secondary school and can be secured through community use via a Community Use Agreement.</p>
2c	Around 4.0ha of employment floor space.	Yes	<p>Approximately 4ha is provided for business/employment space. The proposed neighbourhood centre will also provide commercial floorspace, contributing to additional employment land.</p>

Policy Criterion	Requirement	Policy Compliance	Commentary
2d	<p>Land and Contributions to provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A 1FE Primary School (expandable to 2FE plus SEND provision) - A 6FE Secondary School (expandable to 8FE plus SEND provision) - A minimum 60 Space nursery 	Yes	Land is to be provided to West Sussex County Council, at nil cost, for a Primary School, a 60 space nursery, and a Secondary School. The school parcels allow for further expansion.
2e	<p>Formal and Informal Open Space including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A 5km pedestrian loop - A MUGA - Play Facilities - Social seating areas 	Yes	<p>Approximately 58 hectares of new public open space is proposed, including multi-functional green spaces, sports pitches, children’s play areas (LAPs, LEAPs and NEAPs), and a 5km walking/cycling loop. The NEAP is provided on a scale that can incorporate a MUGA, subject to detailed design at Reserved Matters.</p> <p>Social seating areas will be designed in accordance with Making Space for Girls and accessibility principles to promote inclusivity.</p>
2f	Sustainable Transport Improvements	Yes	<p>The Proposed development will deliver new and enhanced pedestrian and cycle ways to promote sustainable and viable active travel. A suite of on and off-site active travel enhancements are to be provided, as detailed within the submitted Transport Assessment.</p> <p>The Proposed Development will also provide a contribution towards local public transport via CIL or S106 (avoiding double counting), specifically the 23-bus service which runs between Horsham and Worthing.</p>
3	<p>The Proposed Development will be required to demonstrate its landscape lap and that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The setting of the Downs link is preserved 	Yes	The Proposed Development has adopted a genuinely landscape-led approach. The setting of the Downs Link is preserved, and PRoWs have been appropriately enhanced with landscape planting incorporated to ensure their rural character is retained insofar as much as possible.

Policy Criterion	Requirement	Policy Compliance	Commentary
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Public rights of way across the site retain some of their rural landscape - A landscape buffer is provided along the western edge - The design has regard to the sensitivity of key views into the Site - The proposed development incorporates character areas building in opportunities for leisure activities 		<p>A significant landscape buffer is retained to the western edge of the Site, and regard has been had to the sensitivity of key views throughout the proposals, as demonstrated in the Landscape ES Chapter.</p> <p>Character areas have been appropriately established, responding both the landscape and developmental features. Further details are available with the DAS and Landscape ES Chapter.</p>
4	<p>The Proposed Development must provide a comprehensive Ecology and Green Infrastructure Strategy, incorporating how a minimum 12% net gain in biodiversity is achieved, and in particular demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ancient Woodland and any other woodland are protected and their setting enhanced; - That natural and semi-natural habitats are retained and protected wherever possible; - Promote the creation of native species-rich hedges through the development; and - Retain and create of wildlife corridors, and support for delivery of the Nature Recovery Network. 	Yes	<p>The Proposed Development will deliver a minimum of +10% Biodiversity Net Gain. Subject to detailed design at the Reserved Matters stage, the proposal may deliver in addition to this minimum in practice.</p> <p>Irreplaceable habitats such as Ancient Woodland are protected through the provision of development buffers in accordance with best practice guidelines.</p> <p>The Proposed Development will retain and enhance natural and semi-natural habitats insofar as possible, alongside creating new habitats to promote enhancements to local biodiversity, including species-rich hedges and wildlife corridors throughout the development.</p> <p>Further details are contained within the accompanying Design and Access Statement and ES Chapter 8 (Ecology).</p>

Policy Criterion	Requirement	Policy Compliance	Commentary
5	The Proposed Development must be accompanied by a sustainability statement ensuring that all homes built are design as net-zero carbon through their expected lifetime.	Yes (subject to design details secured at Reserved Matters)	<p>The Proposed Development is accompanied by both an Energy Statement and Sustainability Statement. These statements set out key strategies to ensure compliance with both national and local planning policies. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All non-residential/commercial units will be designed and built to achieve BREEAM 'Excellent' Rating. - The development will target a reduction in carbon emissions beyond Building Regulations Part L. - Water efficiency measures will be installed in all dwellings to target a maximum internal daily water consumption of 110 litres/person/day. - The development will be gas free and all homes will be designed with low carbon and renewable technologies such as heat pumps and photo-voltaics. <p>Energy efficiency measures will be incorporated at design stage, considering building fabric, form factor and unit orientation. These measures ensure that homes built are capable of being net-zero following the de-carbonisation of the national grid.</p>
6	The design and layout of the development will recognise and respect existing heritage assets, particularly Great House Farm (Grade II*), and preserve those elements of the heritage assets and their settings that are significant in illustrating their historic and architectural interest.	Yes	<p>The Proposed Development has been developed with close regard to the setting of existing heritage assets, most notably Great House Farmhouse.</p> <p>A '<i>less than substantial</i>' degree of harm will be given to the setting of Great House Farm. However, this harm is outweighed by the substantial benefits of the Proposed Development.</p> <p>Its historic and architectural interest will be preserved. Larger, unsympathetic modern barns close to the Farmhouse will be removed and the wider redevelopment of the Site into a repurposed community area,</p>

Policy Criterion	Requirement	Policy Compliance	Commentary
			returning the more historic agricultural buildings (if feasible) to a viable use. There will be some heritage benefits in this regard.
7	<p>The Proposed Development will be submitted alongside a comprehensive Transport Masterplan including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A walking and cycling strategy; - Improved links between the Site and Christ’s Hospital Station, including enhancements to the Downs Link, a new link connecting the development to Two Mile Ash Road, and a new car park and cycle storage and Christ’s Hospital Station. - New Road Improvements including: a new link road between the development and Hop Oast roundabout, enhancements to Hop Oast Roundabout; - Four new accesses to the development - New walking and cycling routes within the Site - Provision of sustainable links between Southwater and Horsham. 	Yes	<p>The Proposed Development has been accompanied by a comprehensive Transport Assessment, which indicates the various measures being introduced both on and off-site to promote walking, cycling and wheeling. A suite of Active Travel routes will be delivered on-site and contributions to off-site improvements will be provided.</p> <p>Enhancements to the route connecting the Site to Christ’s Hospital Station, including a new access onto Two Mile Ash Lane, are also included in the proposals. Furthermore, provision of expanded car park and cycle space at Christ Hospital is provided (subject to need).</p> <p>The provision of a new link road connecting to Hop Oast Roundabout is proposed, as well as three other access (Worthing Road, Chessel Avenue and Two Mile Ash Road). A dedicated access from Worthing Road to the Gypsy and Traveller Pitches is also provided.</p> <p>Enhancements to off-site highways improvements are proposed, including enhancements to Hop Oast Roundabout, to facilitate sustainable links to Southwater and Horsham.</p>

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